

ENGLISH VERSE TRANSLATIONS OF GREEK TRAGEDY, 1800-1840

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## CONTENTS

Preface	iv
List of Principal Abbreviations	vi
Abstract	viii
Chapter 1    Introduction	1
Chapter 2    Classical Education	23
Chapter 3    Non-Classical Education	59
Chapter 4    From Sculpture to Tragedy	83
Chapter 5    The 'Mere Reading Public'	117
Chapter 6    The Links in the Chain	159
Chapter 7    Theory of Translation, 1800-1840	197
Chapter 8    The Verse Translations: Sluggish Beginnings, 1800-1818	224
Chapter 9    The Verse Translations: Steady Progress, 1819-1830	279
Chapter 10   The Verse Translations: Full Flood, 1831-1840	333
Chapter 11   Conclusion	402
Appendix 1   Verse Translations of Greek Tragedy Published 1800-1840	407
Appendix 2   Partial Translations of Greek Tragedy	411
Appendix 3   Editions of Greek Tragedy by English Scholars, With a List of Reviews	419
Appendix 4   Reviews of Greek and Latin Poetry in Translation	423
Appendix 5   Articles on Greek Tragedy	429
Bibliography	433



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Comparative Table of Greek and Latin Studies at Eton	34
Figure 2	Languages Learned by Fourteen Women, 1800- 1840	72
Figure 3	Reviews of Classical Books and Translations, 1800-1840	120
Figure 4	Verse Translations and Translators, 1800- 1818	225
Figure 5	Verse Translations and Translators, 1819- 1830	280
Figure 6	Verse Translations and Translators, 1831- 1840	334

## PREFACE

Some of the material used for Chapter 7, 'Theory of Translation, 1800-1840', has already been published in my article, 'Coleridge and John Hookham Frere's Translations of Aristophanes', which appeared in January 1981 in New Approaches to Coleridge: Biographical and Critical Essays, ed. Donald Sultana. Since then, however, I have been able to give further thought to Coleridge's term 'equivalence of effect', used with reference to translation, and my latest suggestion for its interpretation appears on pages 221-22. I am grateful to Dr Sultana for one or two useful suggestions on the interpretation of Coleridgean theory.

For the identification of the authors of articles in the early nineteenth-century periodicals I have relied principally on the following sources: B.C. Nangle, The Monthly Review, Second Series, 1790-1815: Indexes of Contributors and Articles; F.P. Riga and C.A. France, Index to the London Magazine; H. and H.C. Shine, The Quarterly Review under Gifford: Identification of Contributors, 1809-1824; and The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900, ed. W.E. Houghton. In citing volume numbers of early nineteenth-century periodicals, I have occasionally been forced into apparent inconsistencies, because of the frequent changes in series and numbering systems used by the periodicals in question. I have at all times made clarity and ease of reference my principal guide. The term 'Review' is used to refer to those periodicals which professed to specialise in articles reviewing new books, while the term 'review' is used to refer to such articles.

I have also been forced into apparent inconsistencies when referring to such tragedies as are known both by their Greek titles and by their English equivalents. I have avoided this whenever possible, but when I have used the classical title (e.g. Prometheus Vincitus) I am referring to the Greek text; and when I have used the Anglicised title (e.g. Prometheus Bound) I am referring to an English translation. In quoting from the Greek plays, the text and line-numbers used are those of the Loeb edition.

In Chapters 8-10 I have quoted fairly extensively from the plays and passages in translation, and have added line-numbers only when my detailed discussion of some of the quoted passages made this necessary as an aid to the reader. I have adopted the following plan in numbering the lines quoted: Quotations from translations of complete plays or long extracts each have their own numbering sequence. Quotations from short passages or scenes follow the line-numbering of these short passages or scenes themselves. The lines quoted from Palin's translation of the Persae follow Palin's own numbering system.

I am aware that the need to quote at such length from translations that are often little-known and difficult to obtain has brought my thesis perilously close to the prescribed maximum length of 100,000 words. In order to keep within this limit I have made a number of cuts to the text. Most of the omitted material was not essential to my argument, but I particularly regret the cuts made in Chapter 5, in which the classical content of a sample of early nineteenth-century periodicals is surveyed. The omitted material gave an account of the publishing policies, circulation figures and changes in format of the periodicals in question, and would have helped to illustrate how their editors and owners tried to cope with changes in public taste.

I hereby declare that the thesis has been composed by myself, and that the work is entirely my own.

M. K. von Romburg

## LIST OF PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS

1. Newspapers and Periodicals

<u>Ath</u>	<u>The Athenaeum</u>
<u>BC</u>	<u>The British Critic</u>
<u>Bl</u>	<u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>
<u>CJ</u>	<u>The Classical Journal</u>
<u>EcR</u>	<u>The Eclectic Review</u>
<u>EdM</u>	<u>The Edinburgh Magazine</u>
<u>EM</u>	<u>The European Magazine</u>
<u>ER</u>	<u>The Edinburgh Review</u>
<u>FM</u>	<u>Fraser's Magazine</u>
<u>FQR</u>	<u>The Foreign Quarterly Review</u>
<u>GM</u>	<u>The Gentleman's Magazine</u>
<u>JEGP</u>	<u>The Journal of English and Germanic Philology</u>
<u>JHS</u>	<u>The Journal of Hellenic Studies</u>
<u>LG</u>	<u>The Literary Gazette</u>
<u>LM</u>	<u>The London Magazine</u>
<u>Met</u>	<u>The Metropolitan</u>
<u>MM</u>	<u>The Monthly Magazine</u>
<u>MR</u>	<u>The Monthly Review</u>
<u>NMM</u>	<u>The New Monthly Magazine</u>
<u>PhM</u>	<u>The Philological Museum</u>
<u>PM</u>	<u>The Penny Magazine</u>
<u>PMLA</u>	<u>Publications of the Modern Language Association</u>
<u>QR</u>	<u>The Quarterly Review</u>
<u>RES</u>	<u>Review of English Studies</u>
<u>RM</u>	<u>The Reading Mercury</u>
<u>WR</u>	<u>The Westminster Review</u>

2. Other Abbreviations

Barrett's Prometheus      Prometheus Bound, translated from the Greek of Aeschylus, and Miscellaneous Poems, by the Translator, Author of "An Essay on Mind", etc. [Elizabeth Barrett] (London, 1833)

- BL British Library
- CSC Coleridge's Shakespeare Criticism, edited by Thomas Middleton Raysor, 2 vols. (London, 1930)
- Dale's Sophocles The Tragedies of Sophocles Translated into English Verse, by T. Dale, 2 vols. (London, 1824)
- Diary Diary by E.B.B. The Unpublished Diary of Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, 1831-32, edited with introduction and notes by Philip Kelley and Ronald Hudson, including psychoanalytical observations by Robert Coles, M.D. (Athens, Ohio, 1969)
- DNB Dictionary of National Biography
- Drennan The Electra of Sophocles [translated by William Drennan] (Belfast, 1817)
- EBB/HSB Elizabeth Barrett to Mr Boyd: Unpublished Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Hugh Stuart Boyd, edited by Barbara P. McCarthy (London, 1955)
- Harford The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, Illustrated by a Dissertation on Grecian Tragedy, etc., by John S. Harford (London, 1831)
- Kennedy Αἰσχύλου Ἀγαμέμνων Τριγώντιος, textum ad fidem editionum, praesertim Blomfeldianae, recognovit, notasque Anglice conscriptas et indices adjecit, J. Kennedy. . . Teutsch Übersetzt von Heinrich Voss; English, translated by James Kennedy (London and Dublin, 1829)
- Lectures A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature, by Augustus William Schlegel, translated from the original German by John Black, 2 vols. (London, 1815)
- LSJ Greek-English Lexicon, compiled by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry Stuart Jones, ninth edition (Oxford, 1940)
- Medwin's Agamemnon The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, translated into English Verse, by Thomas Medwin (London, 1832)
- Medwin's Prometheus (1827) Prometheus Bound, a Tragedy, from the Greek of Aeschylus [by Thomas Medwin] (Siena, 1827)
- Medwin's Prometheus (1832) Prometheus Bound, a Tragedy, Translated from the Greek of Aeschylus, into English Verse, by Thomas Medwin (London, 1832)
- NLS National Library of Scotland
- NUC National Union Catalog
- Palin Aeschylus, The Persians, Translated on a New Plan from the Text of Porson, as Corrected by Dindorff, Blomfield and Schütz; with Copious English. . . Notes. . . and an Engraved Plan of the Battle of Salamis, by William Palin (London, 1829)
- Passages Charles Knight, Passages of a Working Life During Half a Century, with a Prelude of Early Reminiscences, 3 vols. (London, 1864)
- Symmons The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, translated by John Symmons (London, 1824)
- Note: Abbreviations for Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, and their works, are those used by the Oxford Classical Dictionary, edited by N.G.L. Hammond and H.H. Scullard, second edition (Oxford, 1970)

## ABSTRACT

Between 1800 and 1840 there developed an unusual interest in Greek tragedy, manifested in numerous articles in the most popular periodicals of the time and many new translations. My purpose is to account for the beginnings of this interest, to trace its development in relation to certain influencing events, to attempt a definition of the theory of translation in the early nineteenth century and finally to examine the translations themselves, both in relation to contemporary theories of translation and on their own merits as English poetry.

The educational system of the time, based as it was on Latin and Greek, tended to produce people more or less proficient in the skills of translation, and more or less interested in Greek literature. At this time, too, despite the continuing poverty of university education, Greek scholars were facilitating the study of Greek tragedy by producing better, more readable editions. Among those who had no classical education (working-class men, businessmen and women), only a few ever learned enough Greek to be able to read Greek texts; but because some knowledge of Greek literature was regarded as a desirable accomplishment, many were eager to read translations.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century an interest in classical Greece had been fostered by such things as Josiah Wedgwood's imitation-Greek pottery, the publication of Flaxman's illustrations of the works of Homer and Aeschylus and the greater ease of travel to the Eastern Mediterranean. Between 1807 and about 1820 this interest was strongly influenced by the arrival in England of the Elgin Marbles, the temporary residence in Paris of the Greco-Roman statues looted by Napoleon from Italy, and the publication of Schlegel's Lectures on Dramatic Art. Schlegel's frequent repetition of the German theory of the relationship between ancient drama and sculpture was echoed in the popular lectures of Coleridge and Thomas Campbell. After 1820 the Greek

War of Independence was associated in many minds with the Persian invasion of classical Greece and thence with Aeschylus. The periodicals responded to their readers' need for more information: beginning with a series in Blackwood's Magazine in 1817, many of them published articles on Greek tragedy which usually included passages in translation. In the 1830s Blackwood's and its rival Fraser's Magazine even published several full-length translations, at a time when the publication of books containing translations reached a peak, one or two imitations of Greek tragedy were performed before enthusiastic audiences, and the production of original English poetry had, for various reasons, reached its lowest ebb.

The theory of translation at this time was in a state of transition. Although the earlier writing of Denham and Dryden still influenced theorists, there was a growing preference for translations which were a true mirror of the thought and style of the originals, rather than a reinterpretation in the form and idiom of contemporary English poetry. This is shown in the translations themselves, which at the beginning of the period imitate eighteenth-century poetry, but which by the 1830s are generally closer to the letter, style and meaning of the original plays. Although some of the translations are bad, both as translations and as poetry, a surprising number of them (particularly those by Robert Morehead, Thomas Dale and Thomas Medwin) have considerable merit.



## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Many currents of thought and feeling run beneath the surface. . . while many ideas are so much part and parcel of the atmosphere breathed by a whole generation that it never occurs to anyone to put them into words. . . It is the abnormal that attracts attention.

E.E. Kellett, The Whirligig of Taste, 9.

The strong attraction of ancient Greece for writers in the early eighteen-hundreds is a subject that has already been examined by numerous critics in the present century. The first of these, Frederick E. Pierce, was concerned mainly to identify English poems showing Greek influence and to suggest reasons for the development of a clearly discernible current by about 1812.<sup>1</sup> The most important of these reasons were improved Greek scholarship, the publication of Mitford's History of Greece (1784-1818) and various travel books, the accessibility of Greek sculpture through Lord Elgin's collection in London and the Louvre in Paris, and the revolt of the modern Greeks against their Turkish masters. Subsequent critics have looked at one or more of these contributing factors in greater detail. Virginia Penn, Terence Spencer and Eugene Borza have shown the relationship between Hellenism and the cause of Greek independence, which gathered strength from the greater ease of travel to Greece towards the end of the eighteenth

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1 Frederick E. Pierce, 'The Hellenic Current in English Nineteenth Century Poetry', JEGP, xvi (1917), 103-35.



century.<sup>2</sup> Other studies, such as those by Harry Levin and Stephen Larrabee, have attempted to define and explain the special attractions of the shattered remains of Greek art.<sup>3</sup> Douglas Bush has written on the use of Greek mythology by the Romantics,<sup>4</sup> while Timothy Webb has examined Shelley's translations from Greek poetry.<sup>5</sup> Most recently, John Buxton has given a brief survey of the growth in interest in ancient Greece from the mid-eighteenth century until 1820,<sup>6</sup> although, surprisingly, he does not refer to the earlier work of B.H. Stern, which is a very thorough account of this growth in the earlier part of Buxton's chosen period;<sup>7</sup> and Richard Jenkyns, whose main concern is with Greek influence on the Victorians, also touches briefly on the origins of Hellenism in England.<sup>8</sup>

However, none of these writers has shown more than the merest passing interest in the influence of Greek tragedy in the early nineteenth century, and apart from a thesis by J.M. Parry on the

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- 2 Virginia Penn, 'Philhellenism in England, 1821-1827', The Slavonic Review, xiv (1935-36), 363-71, 647-60; Terence Spencer, Fair Greece, Sad Relic: Literary Philhellenism from Shakespeare to Byron; Eugene N. Borza, 'Sentimental Philhellenism and the Image of Greece', Classics and the Classical Tradition: Essays Presented to Robert E. Dengler on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday, edited by Eugene N. Borza and Robert W. Carrubba, 5-25.
  - 3 Harry Levin, The Broken Column: a Study in Romantic Hellenism; Stephen A. Larrabee, English Bards and Grecian Marbles: the Relationship between Sculpture and Poetry, especially in the Romantic Period.
  - 4 Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry.
  - 5 Timothy Webb, The Violet in the Crucible: Shelley and Translation.
  - 6 John Buxton, The Grecian Taste: Literature in the Age of Neo-Classicism, 1740-1820.
  - 7 B.H. Stern, The Rise of Romantic Hellenism in English Literature, 1732-86.
  - 8 Richard Jenkyns, The Victorians and Ancient Greece.

much wider subject of English attitudes to Greek tragedy from 1491 until the present day,<sup>9</sup> no writer seems to have gone beyond a study of Aeschylus and Shelley.<sup>10</sup> (There is a thesis at Yale University by Leonard B. Beach on 'Aeschylus in English Poetry, 1800-1850' (1933), but I have unfortunately been unable to gain access to it, and therefore have no idea how Beach has conducted his investigations.) Parry's main purpose, in his chapters on the early nineteenth century, is to show that the growing accessibility of Greek tragedy was not accompanied by any change in the persistently moralistic interpretation of the plays themselves.<sup>11</sup> But the very breadth of his chosen time-span has made a detailed examination of this narrower period quite impossible, and he has therefore not done much more than condemn Schlegel for introducing English readers to an inaccurate understanding of Greek tragedy. Secondly, although he has observed that popular discussions of Greek tragedy appear in the periodicals between 1817 and 1837,<sup>12</sup> his failure to examine them in depth has prevented him from seeing either their internal development or their proper purpose. Thirdly, he has failed to take note of the most astonishing and hitherto unmarked fact that in the 1830s, no less than ten full-length translations of Greek tragedy, as well as a translation of the only extant satyr play and two comedies of Aristophanes, were published in the two leading magazines of the period, Blackwood's

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9 J.M. Parry, 'English Attitudes to Greek Tragedy, 1491-1971' (unpublished PhD thesis, Cambridge University, 1976).

10 For example, R.S. Sa'di, 'Prometheus Unbound: its origins in Aeschylus' tragedy and in Shelley's earlier poetry' (unpublished PhD thesis, Manchester University, 1973).

11 Parry sums up his findings for this period on p. 63.

12 See Parry, 48-69.

and Fraser's.

Such a discovery cries out for investigation. One translated play, or even an article containing passages in translation, might perhaps be explained away as pure chance, or even as an example of a desperate editor printing anything he could find simply to fill up the pages for that month's issue, but no editor, however desperate, would have published so many, nor would he have given any of them pride of place as a leading article, had he not felt that they were of special interest to his readers. This happened both in Fraser's, when Thomas Medwin's translation of the Choephoroe was the first article in the second part of a double issue for the month of November, 1832;<sup>13</sup> and in Blackwood's, which printed Matthew J. Chapman's translation of the Prometheus as the first article in December, 1836.<sup>14</sup> Who wrote these translations? Who would have read them? And why were translations of Greek tragedy deemed to be of special interest at this time? Assuming that the magazine translations were not born full-grown and without gestation like Athene from the head of Zeus, the general interest in all things Greek at the height of the Romantic period in England must in some way have developed into a specific interest in Greek tragedy; and the presence or absence in the reading public of a sound knowledge of Greek must have had some connection with the appearance of translations of Greek tragedy in such quantity. Nor can the appearance of translations in the magazines be unrelated to the publication of translations in book-form, and a quick inspection of the only available bibliography of

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13 FM, vi (1832), 509-35.

14 Bl, xl (1836), 721-40.

English translations of Greek literature, by Finley M.K. Foster,<sup>15</sup> shows that there was a sudden growth in the numbers of new verse translations of Greek tragedy, beginning in 1817 and reaching a peak in 1832-33.

The general purpose of my thesis is therefore to approach the problem of the translations themselves by first of all providing the necessary background. The choice of 1800 and 1840 as terminal dates makes it possible to trace the gradual development of interest in Greek tragedy, as well as the incipient decline, and although the selection of 1800 as the starting-date was purely arbitrary in the first instance, it is given support by the statistical information provided by Foster in the introduction to his bibliography. From 1800-1810 there was a doubling in the number of new and reprinted translations from Greek (both prose and poetry), and in 1820-1830 the number of new translations, which had been declining, was suddenly more than doubled.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, while Greek tragedy lay fourth in the popularity league of subjects chosen for translation (behind philosophy, lyric poetry and epic) in the fifty years prior to 1800, in the next fifty years it reached first place (followed by history, epic and lyric poetry), and remained there.<sup>17</sup> Foster cites all the usual reasons for the increased popularity of Greek literature, and adds three others: the preference for Greek to Latin books in the Reviews, the important place given to the classics in the

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15 Finley M.K. Foster, English Translations from the Greek: a Bibliographical Survey.

16 Foster, xii.

17 Foster, xxvi.

educational system, and the increasing numbers of cheap 'libraries'.<sup>18</sup> But he had space only for one brief suggestion of a possible reason for the greater interest in Greek drama after 1800: that it was 'a new-found treasure', now that it was receiving more and better editorial attention.<sup>19</sup>

I have limited my investigation to verse translations because almost all of the prose translations before 1840 were intended simply as schoolboy 'cribs' to be used in conjunction with a Greek text, and had no literary pretensions. For the period 1800-1840, Foster lists 14 new translations of Aeschylus, 11 of Euripides and 10 of Sophocles, of which 8, none and 2 respectively were in verse.<sup>20</sup> As Douglas Bush has already observed with reference to Foster's list of translations of Homer,<sup>21</sup> Foster's bibliography is not entirely reliable. Foster has failed to notice two books of verse translation in this period: the anonymous Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles (1832) and Joseph Anstice's Selections from the Choric Poetry of the Greek Dramatic Writers (1832). Also, his purpose of listing only separately published translations has naturally caused the exclusion of all translations published in the magazines, and all translated passages included in books of verse. Thus, although Foster's bibliography is a useful springboard for research, his lists must be checked carefully and supplemented as required. In Appendices 1 and 2, I have provided lists of plays and passages in translation which are fuller and more correct than those given by Foster.

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18 Foster, xvi-xx.

19 Foster, xxviii.

20 Foster, 2-3, 46-48, 108-09.

21 Douglas Bush, 'English Translations of Homer', PMLA, xli (1926), 335-41.

In Appendix 1, I have listed all the full-length verse translations published between 1800 and 1840. Section A contains all the reprints of eighteenth-century translations: 7 of Aeschylus, 8 of Euripides and 9 of Sophocles. Section B contains all new verse translations published in book-form: 17 entries in all, although the listing is complicated by several facts. The first item on the list, whose source is the National Union Catalog, is probably not a book as such, but simply a collation of four translations by Thomas Medwin which had been published in Fraser's Magazine. Secondly, there are two entries for Medwin's translation of the Prometheus, which was first published in Siena in 1827, and then republished in a much-revised form in London in 1832. Thirdly, George Croker Fox first published his translation of Prometheus along with his translation of Sophocles' Electra in 1835, and then reprinted it, practically unchanged, along with his translation of Agamemnon in The Death of Demosthenes and Other Original Poems in 1839. Fox's Prometheus has been listed only once. Fourthly, I have included Shelley's translation of the Cyclops, first published in Posthumous Poems in 1824, although it is a satyr play, not a tragedy, and does not therefore come within the scope of this thesis. Excluding the compilation from Fraser's and Shelley's Cyclops, and reckoning Medwin's Prometheus as one translation, this gives the figures of 9 translations of Aeschylus, none of Euripides and 4 of Sophocles, with one book of selections from all three tragedians. Section C contains all the full-length verse translations published in the magazines. This list is also a little complicated, in that the second printing of the translation of the Eumenides by Chapman (which appeared in Blackwood's in March 1837, and again in May 1839) is not separately listed; the



translation of the Cyclops in Blackwood's in October, 1832, which was probably written by John Wilson,<sup>22</sup> has only been included for the sake of completeness, as was Shelley's translation, and will not be examined later in this thesis; and the translations of the Agamemnon and Prometheus by Thomas Medwin, separately published in 1832, were reprinted, with some revisions and corrections, in Fraser's in November 1838 and August 1837 respectively. Excluding the reprinted translations of Medwin and Chapman, as well as the translation of the Cyclops, there were 6 new translations of Aeschylus, 1 of Euripides and none of Sophocles in the magazines. The total of all completely new translations of tragedy, excluding reprinted and revised versions, is 15 of Aeschylus, 1 of Euripides and 4 of Sophocles. Even when one remembers that one of these entries for Sophocles is Thomas Dale's two-volume translation of the seven extant plays, while the 15 entries for Aeschylus are all translations of single plays, the preference for Aeschylus is unmistakable. Furthermore, the Agamemnon and Prometheus between them account for over half of this total, with 5 different translations of Agamemnon and 4 of Prometheus. The reason for this preference, and the virtual eclipse of Euripides, are two of the problems to be considered in subsequent chapters.

Appendix 2 contains all the passages of Greek tragedy published in translation in books and magazines between 1800 and 1840. While aiming for completeness, I am aware that some translations in obscure publications may have been overlooked, but they are likely to be so small and so insignificant that their discovery would not seriously affect my general conclusions. The

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22 Thomas Medwin, The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley, 246.

translated passages which I have found are so numerous that I have subdivided them into three sections, 1800-1818, 1819-1830 and 1831-1840, corresponding with the divisions in Chapters 8-10, and a list of the books containing translations has been appended. This subdivision also makes it possible to see more clearly the decline in interest in Euripides and the rise in popularity of Aeschylus. In the first period, there are 6 entries for Aeschylus, 21 for Euripides and 10 for Sophocles, making 37 in all. In the second period, there are 3 entries for Aeschylus, 7 for Euripides and 6 for Sophocles, making 16 in all. In the third period, there are 20 entries for Aeschylus, 24 for Euripides and 28 for Sophocles, making 72 in all. The figures for the third period are distorted, in that 47 of the entries represent the translations in Anstice's Selections. By subtracting these (12 entries for Aeschylus, 21 for Euripides and 14 for Sophocles), the totals of 8 for Aeschylus, 3 for Euripides and 14 for Sophocles give a fairer representation. It has also been impracticable to list separately each passage translated by Lockhart, Morehead and Lytton, since some of these are no more than one or two lines in length, but I do not feel that a separate listing of these passages would seriously affect the general trends; if anything, it would make the popularity of Aeschylus even more obvious, but at the same time obscure the way in which partial translations gradually decrease in number as the frequency of full-length translations increases. I have also prefaced Chapters 8-10 with a chronological listing of all the translations in each of the three subsidiary periods in turn. From Appendices 1 and 2, it is clear that the first translated passage (by Byron) was published in 1807, the first selection of passages in translation (by Bland



and Merivale) was published in 1812, and the first new full-length translation (by Drennan) was published in 1817. It is also clear that the frequency of publication increases rapidly after 1817.

My study of the background to these translations falls into three parts. First of all, I shall examine the state of education in the early nineteenth century to see what it can tell about the potential writers and readers of translations; secondly, I shall attempt to trace the growth of popular interest in Greek tragedy, and the way in which it led to the publication of so many translations in and around 1832-33; thirdly, I wish to provide a link with the translations themselves by attempting a definition of the theory of translation at this time.

#### A. The State of Education

There is nothing new in the observation that the kind of education most highly esteemed at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a classical one, although the Utilitarians were before long to encourage strong doubts about its true value in a changing world. The best account of classical education in this period is provided by Martin Lowther Clarke in his books Classical Education in Britain, 1500-1900 and Greek Studies in England, 1700-1830, which can be supplemented by referring to R.L. Archer, Secondary Education in the Nineteenth Century, and J.W. Adamson, English Education, 1789-1902. However, Clarke's awareness of the tedium of the school syllabus and the continuing poverty of scholarship at the universities (a legacy of the eighteenth century) has not entirely prevented him from suggesting too readily that many boys studied Greek with an enthusiasm that remained with them for life. In Chapter 2 I have tried to determine how far the educational

system tended to produce a group of people more or less interested in Greek literature, particularly tragedy. I have also tried to see whether boys taught at home or in small private schools were in any way more likely to realise that there was more to Greek literature than dull exercises in parsing and translationese.

The other side of this particular coin has received less scrutiny. Classical education was the prerogative of the male members of the higher social classes, and its exclusiveness made it seem all the more desirable to many of those who did not share it. Richard Altick's book, The English Common Reader, has a very informative account of the reading habits of the working classes, but gives the impression that they were not interested in the classics. As for middle-class men who had not learned Greek at school, and women, who were thought to be mentally incapable of doing such a thing, nothing has been written about their possible interest in Greek literature, especially Greek tragedy, whether in translation or otherwise. I have tried to fill this gap in Chapter 3, for which my main sources have been autobiographies, memoirs, diaries and collections of letters, although, as Amy Cruse has pointed out,<sup>23</sup> such sources do not usually say much about which books have been read, why they were chosen, or what the reader thought of them. Several remarks in reviews of translations<sup>24</sup> seemed to suggest that the largest potential readership was among women, and I have therefore taken a representative sample of fourteen literary ladies, some famous, some less well known, to see what knowledge of Greek or interest

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23 Amy Cruse, The Englishman and his Books in the Early Nineteenth Century, 10-11.

24 See ER, ix (1806-07), 319; QR, i (1809), 70; QR, xliv (1831), 392.

in Greek literature they had.

### B. Growing Popularity

Between them, these two chapters do suggest that some knowledge of Greek literature was seen as a desirable asset for the well-read man or woman, but they do not do much to explain why or when a general interest in Greek literature should develop into a special interest in Greek tragedy. It is too facile to say with Foster that Greek tragedy was 'a new-found treasure'. It may have been so to the classical scholar, but how did it come to be so popular that twenty new translations of Greek tragedy appeared between 1817 and 1840, to say nothing of the shorter extracts? I have attempted to answer this question in three stages. First of all, I have tried to show in Chapter 4 that the growing interest in ancient Greece was so influenced by a specific sequence of events that the emergence of a special interest in Greek drama between approximately 1810 and 1820 was quite inevitable. In particular, the connection between the arrival in England of the Elgin Marbles, the publication of Schlegel's Lectures on Dramatic Art, which frequently repeated the German theory of the relationship between ancient drama and sculpture, and the popular lectures of Coleridge and Thomas Campbell, a relationship of vital importance, seems hitherto to have remained unnoticed.

Secondly, I wished to investigate as wide and representative a sample as possible of the most popular periodicals of the time, in order to prove beyond doubt that public interest in Greek tragedy did begin some time before 1820, as has been suggested, and to discover how the presentation of Greek tragedy to the

reading public changed as the years went by. Between 1800 and 1840 there were many radical changes in the nature of Reviews and magazines, connected with the emergence of a fairly affluent middle class which was anxious for information and entertainment of a less staid and elitist kind than that offered by eighteenth-century periodicals. This has made it possible for me to examine a total of twenty periodicals of various sorts, including two specialist classical magazines, to see what interest they took in classical literature in general and Greek tragedy in particular. I have collected three categories of information, which have formed the basis of my findings in Chapter 5. Firstly, I have tabulated all the reviews of classical literature, in order to illustrate the special interest in Greek literature, both in translation and in the original Greek. The statistical figures are given in Figure 3. Next, I have compiled a list of all new editions of Greek tragedy by English editors, and included a note of the reviews of these new editions in the general magazines and Reviews only, for there was no useful information to be drawn from the existence of reviews of these editions in the specialised classical periodicals. Although the editions listed have not been subdivided, it is worth noting here that there were 20 editions in the period 1831-1840; that the editions before 1818 were most likely to be widely reviewed; and that the identity of the editors helps to confirm Parry's finding that a period of genuine scholarship was followed by a period of pseudo-scholarship.<sup>25</sup> This list of new editions and reviews is in Appendix 3.

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25 Parry, 48-49.

Thirdly, I have listed in Appendix 5 all the periodical articles on Greek tragedy known to me, of which the majority come from the twenty periodicals in my survey. I have included review articles only if they are substantially discussions of Greek tragedy rather than reviews proper, and articles in the specialist magazines only if they discuss the literary qualities of Greek tragedy. All of the articles from the twenty periodicals in the survey are more fully described and discussed in Chapter 5.

Having examined the interest shown in Greek tragedy by the periodicals, I can then move to the third part of my investigation, which is the correlation of the evidence presented in Chapters 2-5, with such other additional information as seems necessary, in order to show that the appearance of the translated plays in Blackwood's and Fraser's was the inevitable final link in a long and far from simple chain.

### C. Translation in Theory and Practice

Oliver Elton once compared the outpouring of translations in the Romantic period to similar activity in the Renaissance.<sup>26</sup> Although he was referring specifically to translations from the classics, he might have said with equal justice that the Romantic period was remarkable for the quantity of translations from many languages. There was, for instance, Cary's translation of Dante (1805, 1814), Southey's translation of El Cid (1808) and many translations from German, such as Coleridge's translation of Schiller's Wallenstein (1800). In view of this great proliferation of translation, it is surprising to discover that nothing of

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26 Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature, 1780-1830, II.381.

substance has been written on the theory of translation in the Romantic period, although several studies of earlier translation theory have been published. The first of these, Early Theories of Translation by Flora R. Amos, describes the changes in attitude from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. John W. Draper amplified the latter part of this period in his article 'The Theory of Translation in the Eighteenth Century', his main purpose being to show that the freedom of translation acceptable in the time of Dryden and Pope was no longer found desirable at the end of the eighteenth century. He concludes by suggesting that 'the growing demand of Romanticism that Celtic literature be as Celtic as possible and Hottentot literature as Hottentot, in order that the thrill of novelty might be maintained, drove translators of the next century to more and more minute fidelity'.<sup>27</sup>

No-one has thought to test the validity of Draper's conclusion by examining the pronouncements of early nineteenth-century theorists, and the most recent writer on English translation theory, T.R. Steiner, has chosen to go over the same neoclassical ground as Amos and Draper.<sup>28</sup> Steiner's work is useful, in that he includes a fuller examination than Draper of the changes in translation theory that took place in the eighteenth century contemporaneously with the rising importance of the individual poet's voice in original poetry.<sup>29</sup> However, by stopping his investigations at 1800, he has been unable to take note of what seems to me to be the most

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27 John W. Draper, 'The Theory of Translation in the Eighteenth Century', Neophilologus, vi (1921), 241-54 (p.254).

28 T.R. Steiner, English Translation Theory, 1650-1800.

29 See T.R. Steiner, 49-60.



significant development of all: until 1800, critics laid much stress on the idea that the best translation was a representation of what the original poet would have written had he been alive in England in the seventeenth or eighteenth century; after 1800, the most advanced theorists seem to regard the best translation as that which will have the same effect on English readers as the original play or poem had once had on its original audience.

As far as I have been able to determine, the only references to a Romantic theory of translation occur in two of the most recent books on translation theory. In The True Interpreter, L.G. Kelly does not go beyond a bald statement of the obvious:

What the Romantics sought through translation was to transfer the creative power of great writers of other languages into their own.

The Romantics. . . aimed at remaking the work itself in the target language and, on these grounds, despite their fascination with translation, despaired.<sup>30</sup>

More useful is Susan Bassnett-McGuire's brief account of Romanticism and translation theory, particularly in her reference to Coleridge's distinction between Fancy and Imagination.<sup>31</sup> Inevitably, it is Coleridge who offers the most satisfactory statement of a Romantic theory of translation, although it has to be pieced together from various references in his letters and notebooks, and from his remarks on 'imitation' and 'copy' in Biographia Literaria. But Coleridge's theory of translation was never published in his own lifetime, and although it can be taken as representing the views of such writers as are generally labelled 'Romantic', there were still many critics who stubbornly adhered to old doctrines,

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30 L.G. Kelly, The True Interpreter: a History of Translation Theory and Practice in the West, 3, 215-16.

31 Susan Bassnett-McGuire, Translation Studies, 64-66.

and serve to remind us of Leslie Stephen's dictum, that the eighteenth century 'lasted in the upper currents of opinion till at least 1832'.<sup>32</sup> In my study of the theory of translation in the early nineteenth century (Chapter 7), I have therefore tried to show the persistence of neoclassical theories, as well as the development of a Romantic theory.

It seems, too, that the craft of translation was more highly esteemed in the early nineteenth century than has often been thought. There are, naturally, a few condescending remarks, such as that of the writer in the Monthly Review, who pitied the non-classical reader for having to 'be contented to catch brief and transient glances' of the glories of classical literature 'through the gratings of translation';<sup>33</sup> or the sneer of the contributor to the British Critic who remarked on the proliferation of translations and added: 'If the public consents to obtain its learning at second hand, be it so: we would not seriously damp the ardour and efforts of so many rising competitors for borrowed fame.'<sup>34</sup> But these opinions, published in two old-fashioned periodicals, probably represent the lingering eighteenth-century scorn of translators. The two most influential Reviews of the period were more encouraging. John Eyre, reviewing Moore's *Anacreon* in the Edinburgh Review, wrote: 'Translation has ceased to be ranked with those occupations which devolve upon literary drudges. This task, as it has been found to require peculiar talents, is at

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32 Quoted by Upali Amarasinghe, Dryden and Pope in the Early Nineteenth Century: a Study of Changing Literary Taste, 1800-1830, 3.

33 MR, xcvi (1822), 15.

34 BC, n.s., ii (1814), 492.



length not only considered as useful, but even repaid with honour.<sup>35</sup> The Quarterly Review, pointing to the growing public indifference to classical learning, stated that it had a duty to encourage good translations worthy of the originals.<sup>36</sup> Alexander Fraser Tytler also seems to have noticed the growing respectability of translation, for he wrote in the introduction to the third edition of his Essay on the Principles of Translation that he hoped his work would show that translation had more 'dignity and importance' than many people supposed.<sup>37</sup> By 1830 there was enough improvement in the status of translation for members of the Royal Society of Literature to have part of William Sotheby's translation of the Iliad read to them before Murray decided to publish it.<sup>38</sup> Soon after this, a reviewer in the New Monthly Magazine went so far as to say that the reader of the abridged edition of Potter's Aeschylus published as Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets: Vol. I, Aeschylus, would obtain a better idea of 'the general scope of Greek tragedy' than 'the most part of those who, with unwilling labour, have struggled through a play or two in the original tongue during the course of their classical studies'.<sup>39</sup>

The growth of a reading public uneducated in the classics had begun in the late eighteenth century,<sup>40</sup> and it was large enough in

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35 ER, ii (1803), 465.

36 QR, i (1809), 69.

37 Alexander Fraser Tytler, Essay on the Principles of Translation, third edition (1813), 10.

38 LG, xiv (1830), 738.

39 NMM, xxxiii (1831), 156.

40 Sister André de Jesus Veilleux, 'Robert Potter and his Translations of Greek Tragedy' (unpublished PhD thesis, Fordham University, 1963), 4, drew attention to the way in which translation became an established genre in the eighteenth century as acquaintance with the classics became less common.

the early nineteenth century for its needs to have a strong influence on the nature of the translations being written. The added material in Tytler's third edition suggests that he became aware of this, and felt it necessary to lay down rules for those writing translations for the reader unacquainted with the original language. But there seems to be some conflict of opinion about what kind of translation the general reader wanted. Draper, for instance, has made much of the growing demand towards the end of the eighteenth century for translations which were closer to the original. And yet Sir Walter Scott distinguished between the classical scholar, who would demand a literal translation, and the general reader, who would prefer a freer translation with modern imagery.<sup>41</sup> This agrees with the generally accepted notion that translators translate into the poetic style and diction most popular with the general public, even though it may have been abandoned by the best poets of the time; but it does not necessarily mean that a translation with modern imagery is false to the style and content of the original text.

In Chapters 8-10, I hope to relate theory to practice by means of an extensive examination of all the published translations of Greek tragedy, in whole or in part. One need look no further than Aristotle's Poetics for a reminder that practice generally precedes theory, and is not necessarily influenced by it, and it is only to be expected that the principles adopted by the translators themselves will be seen to change before the comparable change in translation theory, and neoclassical diction and verse

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41 Sir Walter Scott, The Works of John Dryden: Vol. I, The Life of John Dryden, 514-515.

forms will give way to a newer poetic style. The most popular poetry in the early nineteenth century was narrative poetry, often melodramatic in tone, full of passion, pathetic descriptions and slightly antiquated words (for example, the narrative poems of Scott, Southey and Byron, Leigh Hunt's The Story of Rimini and The Fall of Herculaneum by Edwin Atherstone); and lyric poetry in stanzas that incorporated rhyme and lines of irregular length. These preferences can also be seen in the choice of passages for translation from Greek tragedy, and in the verse technique employed in the translation of choral lyrics.

As for the writers of translation, their motives for undertaking such an arduous and often thankless task must have varied. Timothy Webb shows how Shelley used translation as a drug in times of depression, when original inspiration failed, and compares the similar examples of Cowper translating Homer, Charles Lloyd translating Alfieri, and Cary translating Dante.<sup>42</sup> A similar motive seems to have driven Elizabeth Barrett Browning to make her first translation of Prometheus, and may also have influenced Medwin in his decision to translate Aeschylus. Some translators, such as Thomas Dale, may have hoped for fame; others, such as J.G. Lockhart, translated for financial gain: but this can have influenced only a few writers, particularly in view of a remark in the New Monthly Magazine in 1832, that a writer could no longer win fame through translation, but must be working from sheer love of his task and admiration of the original.<sup>43</sup> By including some biographical information on the writers whose translations are

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42 Webb, 40-41.

43 NMM, xxxvi (1832), 479-80.

examined in Chapters 8-10, I hope to illuminate the various reasons for their work.

In my analysis of the translations, I shall retain Dryden's terms 'paraphrase' and 'imitation', since they are clearly defined in Chapter 7, but shall replace his 'metaphrase' — an obsolete word — with the phrase 'literal translation'. This does not imply a rejection of the terminology developed by the most recent writers on translation (such as the commonly used terms 'source text' and 'target text'), but rather a conscious decision to employ terminology close to that used by the early nineteenth-century critics themselves, since I am less concerned with the wider aspects of translation theory than with the attitudes of writers at that time to the translations they and their contemporaries were producing.

I am, however, conscious of my debt to several writers on the subject of translation, for their analysis of general theory or for suggestions on critical procedure. George Steiner's After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation I found invaluable for its discussion of general <sup>n</sup>linguistic theory. Of two books mentioned earlier, L.G. Kelly's The True Interpreter, although unoriginal, has a useful survey of translation theory from Roman times; and Susan Bassnett-McGuire's recently-published Translation Studies, which would have been even more useful had it been available two years earlier, has helped to confirm my own discoveries or put them in perspective.<sup>44</sup> For practical purposes, I learned something of critical technique from André Lefevere's analysis of seven quite different translations of Catullus 64 in Translating Poetry: Seven

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44 See notes 30 and 31 above.

### Strategies and a Blueprint.

While trying as far as possible to judge the translations from Greek tragedy according to the criteria which each individual translator appears to be following (but which are not always easy to determine), I have been forced by the sheer volume of translations to be highly selective in my choice of passages for criticism. For this reason, I have looked for what Matthew Arnold might have called 'touchstones for translation': these are passages which, because of their subject-matter, have been particularly attractive to translators in the early nineteenth century, or which, in their use of imagery and other stylistic features, are especially typical of the original tragedians themselves. By looking at different translations of the same passage, I have sought to show the change in translation technique from 'neoclassical' to 'Romantic' and from free paraphrase to close translation. One passage from the Agamemnon, which contains a pun on Helen's name, has even made it possible to show the persistence, with two honourable exceptions, of the old Johnsonian disapproval of this 'lowest form of wit'.

By combining a discussion of the quality of the translations as good English verse with an analysis of their relative success as translations, I can therefore round off my study in depth of one small but far from insignificant portion of the literary world of the early nineteenth century. If I can show that the interest in Greek tragedy, combined with an enthusiasm for reading and writing translations, has produced at least a few meritorious English verse translations; and if these translations can be seen to fill the gap in English poetry between the last of the Romantics and the first of the Victorians, then my purpose has been achieved.

## CHAPTER 2. CLASSICAL EDUCATION

Shelley, when I was in Switzerland, translated the Prometheus to me before I wrote my ode; but I never open a Greek book.

T. Medwin, Conversations of Lord Byron, 156.

### A. The Grammar and Public Schools

Education in the old grammar schools and the emergent public schools was little more than a training in the skills of translation, first from Latin, and later from Greek. Fairly detailed information is available about teaching in the small number of schools whose methods and curricula were generally imitated elsewhere, and whose choice of textbooks largely determined the texts and authors which publishers chose to put on the market. Eton and Westminster were the two schools which had exercised most influence on the choice of curricula in other schools in the late eighteenth century; in the nineteenth century, Eton continued to hold this influential position, but the influence of Westminster was now past its peak.<sup>1</sup> The general impression from N. Carlisle's encyclopaedic work on the endowed grammar schools<sup>2</sup> is that most schools followed the Eton system. The reforming work of Arnold at Rugby and Butler at Shrewsbury had no influence until the late 1820s and 1830s, when Butler's methods were even adopted at Eton.<sup>3</sup> The reforms of

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1 Adamson, 62; Archer, 15.

2 Nicholas Carlisle, A Concise Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools of England and Wales.

3 Adamson, 68; Archer, 58.



Butler and Arnold, however, probably did not have much effect on the translations examined later in Chapters 8-10, since these reforms were mainly aimed at improving the teaching of grammar, and at diversifying the curriculum by introducing history and philosophy. Moreover, none of the translators of tragedy was educated at a time or place where the influence of these two headmasters could have been felt.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the grammar schools were still following the same rigid curriculum they had used for two hundred years, and their teaching methods were equally old-fashioned. The avowed purpose of education through reading the classics was to inspire 'manliness, patriotism and a love of liberty' and to provide a plentiful supply of 'valuable moral lessons'.<sup>4</sup> According to D.H. Urquhart, writing in 1803, a classical education was of value to men of every imaginable profession from lawyer and statesman to army officer and artist.<sup>5</sup> Thirty years later the professor of Greek and Classical Literature at Durham University was making exactly the same point in his defence of classical education.<sup>6</sup> This laudable goal was to be achieved by devoting almost all of school time to rote-learning of grammar rules (usually in Latin, even when Greek was being learned), translation to and from Latin and Greek, and repetition of passages learned by heart. Such little time as remained might be filled with religious education and a smattering of geography and mathematics. One suspects that it was the rote-learning, rather

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4 Martin Lowther Clarke, Greek Studies in England, 1700-1830, 12-14.

5 D.H. Urquhart, Commentaries on Classical Learning, 6-65.

6 Henry Jenkyns, A Lecture on the Advantages of Classical Studies, 6-11.

than the actual content of the reading material, that would stiffen the moral fibre of the unfortunate pupils.

Translation was the backbone of this rather unattractive curriculum, and was performed slowly and laboriously. The normal method was for boys to translate each word separately, often parsing it also, and then to translate each sentence into continuous English. Boys at Charterhouse were even required to render each Latin or Greek word by a single English word, a practice which cannot have done much to encourage fluent translation, or to help the average pupil to understand the text he was supposed to be reading.<sup>7</sup> There were some schools which used more enlightened methods, but they seem to have been all too few. Henry Fynes Clinton, for example, described as 'excellent' the teaching methods at Southwell School, which he attended for seven years until summer 1796. When he was transferred from Southwell to Westminster School, he was bitterly disappointed with the quality of the teaching there, which compared so badly with what he had known.<sup>8</sup>

Clinton was particularly critical of the lax discipline at Westminster, and the failure of the masters to insist on accuracy. Unfortunately, there is evidence to show that most other schools were not much better, and can have done little to foster a love of the classics. Bryan Waller Procter (Barry Cornwall) was at Harrow at the same time as Byron, and seems to have idled away his time in similar fashion. According to Procter, it was very easy for boys to avoid detection if their school-work went undone, and the little classical reading that he himself actually did apparently

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7 Clarke, Classical Education, 53-54.

8 Literary Remains of Henry Fynes Clinton, ed. C.J. Fynes Clinton, 4-6.



passed as unprofitably over his mind as 'shadows over the unreflecting earth'.<sup>9</sup> In later life he had forgotten all his Greek and most of his Latin, and it is rather surprising to learn that he had nevertheless read 'almost all the classics which had been converted into English'.<sup>10</sup> Byron, on the contrary, claimed to have developed a permanent distaste for the classics, although he could still recall passages of classical poetry both learned and ruined for him at school:

I abhorr'd  
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,  
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word  
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record  
Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd  
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught  
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,  
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought  
By the impatience of my early thought,  
That, with the freshness wearing out before  
My mind could relish what it might have sought,  
If free to choose, I cannot now restore  
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.  
Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,  
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse  
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,<sup>11</sup>  
To comprehend, but never love thy verse.

And yet even Byron, for all his posturing, and his proud boast that he had never opened a Greek book since leaving school, was prepared to listen to Shelley translating Aeschylus, and sufficiently moved by the experience to compose his poem 'Prometheus'.<sup>12</sup> His mixed feelings about his classical education are also clear from his admission in a letter to John Murray in

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9 Bryan Waller Procter, An Autobiographical Fragment and Biographical Notes, 20-21, 30.

10 Procter, 31.

11 Childe Harold, IV.lxxv-lxxvii. The Complete Poetical Works of Lord Byron, ed. Jerome J. McGann, II.149-50.

12 Thomas Medwin's Conversations of Lord Byron, ed E.J. Lovell, 156.

1817 that he had been 'passionately fond' of the Prometheus when he was a boy, and had also liked the Medea and Septem.<sup>13</sup> This conflicting evidence suggests that, although many were deterred by their schoolboy experience from reading the classics in adult life, they had somehow developed an awareness of the greatness of classical (especially Greek) literature and a desire to become better acquainted with it, even in translation.

There were always a few talented people who had taken pleasure in translation at school and found similar pleasure in later life. Cyrus Redding remembered having 'translated Ovid's story of Cephalus and Procris into tolerable English verse at thirteen'.<sup>14</sup> Thomas Campbell was much the same age when he, too, tried his hand at verse translation. He would usually translate into English hexameters, to the great admiration of his schoolfellows, and according to his biographer William Beattie some of the translations of the youthful poet had 'more fluency than his original attempts of the same, or even of a later date'.<sup>15</sup> Henry Francis Cary, who later translated Dante, was even younger when, at the early age of eight, he translated part of Odyssey I into 'childish prose', then chopped this prose up into lengths of ten syllables each, and wrote it out as poetry.<sup>16</sup> In later life the journalist H.F. Chorley recalled the pleasure he had taken in Greek literature at school,

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13 Byron's Letters and Journals, ed. L.A. Marchand, V.268. See Chapter 8 below for Byron's translations from Greek tragedy.

14 Cyrus Redding, Fifty Years' Recollections Literary and Personal, with Observations on Men and Things, I.12.

15 William Beattie, Life and Letters of Thomas Campbell, I.40, 45-46.

16 Henry Cary, Memoir of the Rev. Henry Francis Cary, M.A., Translator of Dante. With his Literary Journal and Letters, I.4.

which had caused him to translate the Hecuba 'from beginning to end' for his own enjoyment.<sup>17</sup> Shelley's principal excursion into the field of translation at school was apparently a translation of half of the elder Pliny's Natural History; but in later life he turned to Greek poetry, and acquired a considerable reputation among his friends for his skill at spontaneous oral translation of his favourite authors.<sup>18</sup> The pleasure that these people took in their self-allotted task may be inferred from the words of a writer in the New Monthly Magazine in 1832: 'For my own part, I have always been an enthusiast in my love of Grecian Literature; and the summer evening on which I first translated a few lines in that Chorus of the "Hecuba" beginning *Aupa, aupa* comes back on my heart even when I now write, with beautiful influence.'<sup>19</sup>

The other major part of the curriculum was composition in Latin or Greek, although prose composition was at this time less practised than verse composition. The task of writing verse in a foreign language according to alien rules of prosody may have offered a rewarding challenge to the few, but was doubtless a drudgery to the many. Their toil was slightly alleviated by the existence of a number of books containing a miscellaneous assortment of verse-lines suitable for incorporation into the poem being constructed, but these books can have done little to encourage poetic creativity in their users (indeed they can scarcely have done anything at all to benefit their users' education), and were

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17 Henry Fothergill Chorley: Autobiography, Memoir, and Letters, compiled by Henry G. Hewlett, I.57.

18 Thomas Jefferson Hogg, The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley, 32; Medwin's Conversations of Lord Byron, 156; Medwin, Life of Shelley, 242-43.

19 NMM, xxxv (1832), 214. The writer was probably R.A. Willmott.

doubtless one reason for the criticism of the system by Coleridge in Biographia Literaria. The poetry of the eighteenth century, claimed Coleridge, was nothing but 'translations of prose thoughts into Poetic language', because of the importance attached to the composition of Latin verses in the public schools. Such exercises, he said, were sensible enough in the fifteenth century, when Latin was so generally used by educated men; but they are futile when the schoolboy can no longer think in Latin.<sup>20</sup> This would be even more true of Greek. But, once again, there were always a few who enjoyed composition. Coleridge himself was one, at least in his student days. In November 1791 he sought to impress his brother George with his industry by telling him that he was 'composing Greek verse, like a mad dog' and that he was 'very fond of Greek verse'. In the following year he won the Browne Medal for Greek Verse Composition.<sup>21</sup> Shelley's cousin Thomas Medwin, whose translations of Aeschylus will be discussed in Chapter 10, apparently also included poems in Latin and Greek in his published miscellanies Nugae (1856) and Odds and Ends (1862).<sup>22</sup> Even more remarkable is the example of George Burges, a friend of Medwin, who had pseudonymously contributed to the Gentleman's Magazine in 1832 some lines which were supposed to be a newly-discovered passage of the Bacchae, but which he had composed himself.<sup>23</sup>

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20 S.T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, I.12-13.

21 Collected Letters of S.T. Coleridge, ed. E.L. Griggs, I.17, 34n.

22 E.J. Lovell, Captain Medwin, Friend of Byron and Shelley, 327. Lovell comments: 'He was in fact a very learned man, however inexactly learned or careless.'

23 The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, ed. F.G. Kenyon, I. 102n. Published in GM, cii<sup>2</sup> (1832), 195-99, this spurious fragment of Euripides provoked much correspondence. See GM, cii<sup>2</sup> 429-32, 522-24, 603-07.

The range of authors studied was not wide, and favoured poetry rather than prose. In his History of Eton College, H.C.M. Lyte quotes from a letter written to him by one 'intimately acquainted with Eton affairs', who was obviously unimpressed by early nineteenth-century education at that school:

There were three ancient authors well known to Etonians — Homer, Virgil, and Horace. If a boy was in the school for eight or ten years. . . he was sure to go through the Iliad once and a half, the Aeneid twice; there was no certainty that he would know the Eclogues or the Georgics at all; and of the Odyssey he must needs know, only too familiarly, a few hundred lines which were in the school-book called the Poetae Graeci, a book then very meagre and insufficient. . . All Horace, except perhaps the Epodes, was read and repeated, subject to expurgation, but it may be doubted whether even superior boys knew the meaning of the Odes accurately. . . The wretched compilation called Scriptores Graeci consisted of a lump of Lucian, with a veneer, gradually thickened, of scraps of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon and Plato; so that literally not one first-rate Greek prose writer was really known to the student.<sup>24</sup>

The syllabus at Westminster was much the same. Apart from Homer, Virgil and Horace, Fynes Clinton read Sallust and a little Greek prose, and six Greek plays. When he left Westminster in 1799 he felt he had 'a more limited stock of classical reading than ought to have been possessed by a boy of eighteen, who had been ten years subjected to school discipline'.<sup>25</sup> A writer in the New Monthly Magazine in 1827 claimed that he had learned little at school because the tutors had had more pupils than they could cope with.<sup>26</sup> A second contributor later in the same year echoed his criticism. 'It is notorious', he wrote, 'that nine-tenths of the persons educated at public schools have never arrived at the knowledge of either Latin or Greek; and it is equally notorious

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24 H.C.M. Lyte, A History of Eton College (1440-1898), 391-92.

25 Clinton, 6-8.

26 NMM, xix (1827), 171-78.

that of the one-tenth who do acquire the knowledge of these languages, far the greater part immediately forget them.'<sup>27</sup> In the Monthly Magazine another writer claimed that not one in fifty remembered anything of their classical reading at school, because the drudgery of the experience destroyed all the beauty of ancient literature.<sup>28</sup> It is therefore hardly surprising to learn that Lord Halifax, who left Eton in 1818, arrived at Oxford without having read a word of Thucydides; and yet he apparently found that he was 'as good a scholar as any man from any other school'. Even the extra tuition for which he had paid had gained him only a reading of Euripides' Alcestis and Juvenal I.<sup>29</sup>

It is only fair, however, to point out that Lord Halifax left Eton without entering the sixth form, where the teaching at that time was in the hands of the headmaster, Dr Keate, and where he would have had the opportunity to read more widely. Doubtless it was the more intensive and extensive work of the sixth form that made the ex-pupils of Eton and Charterhouse superior to C.J. Blomfield, the future Greek scholar, as he found to his chagrin on first arriving at Cambridge from Bury Grammar School in 1804. In order to catch up with them, he found it necessary in his first four months at Cambridge to draw up a rigorous reading programme. Spending sometimes sixteen to eighteen hours a day on his work, he read through Aristophanes, the Greek tragedians, Herodotus, Thucydides and much of Cicero, as well as devoting some time daily to composition and translation.<sup>30</sup> The preponderance of Greek

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27 NMM, xix (1827), 479.

28 MM, n.s., xix (1835), 622.

29 Lyte, 392.

30 A. Blomfield, A Memoir of Charles James Blomfield, with Selections from his Correspondence, I.4.



authors in Blomfield's reading list is a reminder that, since Greek was invariably learned after Latin, the schoolboy might be expected to have made the acquaintance of the chief Latin authors before his final year or years at school, and would therefore be able to finish his school education with a study of the principal Greek authors.

It is difficult to assess exactly how widely Greek was taught in the first half of the nineteenth century. Carlisle's book, which was published in 1818, is not as helpful as one might have expected from such a comprehensive survey: firstly, because some schools failed to respond to his requests for information; and secondly, because those schools which did volunteer information were not uniform in the kind or quantity of information they supplied. Some schools failed to make clear whether they did or did not teach the classics; and many did no more than indicate which grammar-books were used, without specifying which authors were read. Moreover, it is difficult to allay the suspicion that many of those schools which professed to teach the classics did not in fact have any classical scholars on their roll, but had to pretend to do so because of the requirements of their founding charters. Few schools were as frank as Crosthwaite School, Keswick, where only six of the 260 scholars were learning Latin and Greek,<sup>31</sup> or Stafford Grammar School, where less than one-sixth of the boys ever wanted to learn classics.<sup>32</sup> Greek was even less in demand than Latin. Melton Mowbray School reported that 'the Latin Grammar is now seldom, and the Greek never, used'.<sup>33</sup> At Hertford Grammar

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31 Carlisle, I.180.

32 Carlisle, II.493.

33 Carlisle, I.779.

School, where there were no boys currently learning Greek since the parents thought it unnecessary, only the Greek Testament and a little Homer were ever likely to be read.<sup>34</sup> On the evidence given by Carlisle, one can only say that about half of the 475 schools listed by him in 1818 claimed to teach classics. Fifty years later the Schools Inquiry Commission reported that only 27% of the 732 schools in their survey offered both Latin and Greek.<sup>35</sup>

Those who did learn Greek would usually begin a few years after beginning Latin. The standard textbook was the Eton Grammar. Written as it was in Latin, with the Greek dialects mixed indiscriminately together, and making no distinction between prose and verse forms, it was hardly the ideal method of teaching Greek to boys whose grasp of Latin was often weak. Despite growing criticism, it was still being used in the 1830s, although better grammars were becoming available.<sup>36</sup> The first Greek books read at Eton, and probably elsewhere,<sup>37</sup> were Aesop and the Greek New Testament; in the upper school, boys read Homer, Lucian and Poetae Graeci.<sup>38</sup> This last book was an anthology, varying slightly from one edition to another, but containing essentially extracts from the Odyssey and Hesiod, and from the main pastoral and lyric poets. Of the 1828 edition, the Edinburgh Review had nothing good to say: the authors were not in chronological order, the biographical notes were 'short and unsatisfactory', the text did not follow the

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34 Carlisle, I.548.

35 Archer, 83.

36 An edition was printed as late as 1839, years after the attack in ER, li (1830), 68-69. See also Clarke, Greek Studies, 16.

37 According to Carlisle, I.xlii, most schools followed the Eton system.

38 Lyte, 316-23.

Figure 1 Comparative Table of Greek and Latin Studies at Eton  
(Information drawn from Lyte, p.320-23)

	Greek	Latin
Lower School	Greek Grammar	Latin Testament <u>Selecta e Profanis</u> Latin Church Catechism Ovid Terence Phaedrus
Fourth Form	Greek Testament Aesop	Farnaby's <u>Delectus</u> Ovid, <u>Metamorphoses</u> <u>Electa ex Ovidio</u> Caesar Terence
Remove	<u>Poetae Graeci</u>	Virgil Horace, <u>Odes</u> Pomponius Mela Cornelius Nepos
Fifth and Sixth Forms	Homer Lucian (Scriptores Graeci) <u>Poetae Graeci</u> Burton's <u>Pentalogia</u> : Soph. <u>Oedipus Tyrannus</u> <u>Oedipus Coloneus</u> <u>Antigone</u> Eur. <u>Phoenissae</u> Aesch. <u>Septem</u> Aristophanes, <u>Plutus</u> or <u>Clouds</u> Morell's 1748 edition of: Eur. <u>Hecuba</u> <u>Orestes</u> <u>Phoenissae</u> <u>Alcestis</u>	Virgil Horace, <u>Odes</u> , <u>Epistles</u> , <u>Satires</u> <u>Scriptores Romani</u> <u>Selecta ex Ovidio</u> , <u>Tibullo et Propertio</u> <u>Epigrammatum Delectus</u>

For a detailed weekly timetable in use at Eton in the early 1800s, see MR, 1833, vol. ii, 212-20.

best editions, and the notes were of use neither to beginners nor to experts. Instead of a good commentary, a prose Latin translation was appended, a 'miserable substitute'.<sup>39</sup>

Instead of Poetae Graeci, some schools, such as Christ's Hospital, Louth Grammar School, Lincoln, and Shrewsbury, were using two textbooks by Andrew Dalzel, the Collectanea Graeca Minora and Collectanea Graeca Majora, which were much better. The Collectanea Graeca Minora, a reader for beginners first published in 1787, contained extracts from several prose and verse authors. Its merit lay particularly in its copious Latin notes, with many difficult words and phrases translated into English, and in its inclusion of a Greek-Latin vocabulary based on Schrevelius' Lexicon. It was reprinted in 1825, and a new revised edition in 1835 by J. Bailey included a trilingual Greek-Latin-English word-list. The Collectanea Graeca Majora, first published in two volumes in 1785 and frequently reprinted, was intended as a comprehensive reader for more advanced students. The first volume contained long extracts from the principal prose authors. The second volume, which contained extracts from Greek poetry, included the Oedipus Tyrannus and Medea in full. As in the Collectanea Minora, there were copious notes, but there was no vocabulary list. In 1821 a supplementary third volume was added, edited by J. Dunbar. Apart from two speeches by Aeschines and Demosthenes, this volume consisted entirely of drama, the plays chosen being the Prometheus, Septem, Philoctetes and Alcestis for tragedy, and the comedies Plutus and Clouds. Because the Collectanea Majora included prose authors, it could also be used instead of Scriptores

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39 ER, li (1830), 69-70.

Graeci, a prose anthology which was subject to as much criticism as its poetic stable-mate. Dalzel's books had in fact been recommended to Samuel Butler by Dr James, the former headmaster of Rugby School, when Butler had sought his advice about what curriculum he should introduce at Shrewsbury. Dr James liked Dalzel's use of English in the notes, and mentioned that teaching Greek without Latin was now prevalent in many schools such as Charterhouse and (he believed) Winchester.<sup>40</sup>

At this stage in their education, many boys would leave school to take up employment, and would soon lose what little facility they had ever had in Greek. In 1809, ten years after leaving Christ's Hospital, Charles Lamb told his friend Charles Lloyd that he did not remember enough Greek to be able to comment on the accuracy of Lloyd's translation of Iliad XXIV; three years later, he had to confess to Lloyd that he had 'quite lost' his Greek.<sup>41</sup> He had been a 'Deputy Grecian',<sup>42</sup> — that is, he had been in the fifth form — and must therefore have construed and recited from Homer, Xenophon and Demosthenes, but had obviously gained no permanent knowledge of Greek, although he did retain some knowledge of Latin,<sup>43</sup> and even claimed that he got a better idea

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40 S. Butler, The Life and Letters of Dr. Samuel Butler, I.28-30. Dr Samuel Parr also had a high opinion of Dalzel's textbooks. See W. Field, Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Opinions of the Rev. Samuel Parr, II.239 and n.

41 The Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb, ed. E.V. Lucas, II.77, 121. See also G.L. Barnett, Charles Lamb: the Evolution of Elia, 193.

42 Letters of C. and M. Lamb, III.306. For a detailed timetable in use at Christ's Hospital at this time, see W. Trollope, A History of the Royal Foundation of Christ's Hospital, 183.

43 He occasionally wrote letters in Latin, and also felt competent to offer comments on Charles Lloyd's Epistles of Horace; Translated into English Verse. See Letters of C. and M. Lamb, II.122-23.



of the Greek tragedies from Latin translations than from any English versions.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps he had shared Leigh Hunt's distaste for the classics at school. Hunt, like Lamb, left Christ's Hospital after his year as a Deputy Grecian. At school, said Hunt,

I had no regard even for Ovid. I read and knew nothing of Horace. . . Cicero I disliked. . . Demosthenes I was inclined to admire. . . Homer I regarded with horror, as a series of lessons which I had to learn by heart before I understood him. . . The only classic I remember having any love for was Virgil; and that was for the episode of Nisus and Euryalus.<sup>45</sup>

But Hunt, unlike Lamb, seems to have gained something from his school reading: he was grateful to Christ's Hospital for having taught him Latin and Greek, and in later life took pleasure in reading Greek and in translating Greek poetry into English, although he never had much time for Greek tragedy.<sup>46</sup> While in Surrey Gaol, he took the opportunity of his enforced leisure to brush up his Greek and send out Greek lessons to his son Thornton.<sup>47</sup> It is probable, though, that Lamb's experience was the more common. Byron scorned to return to the classical books of his youth; Procter had to resort to translation; Redding was twenty-four when he returned to the classics after his school-days, but seems to have read only Latin.<sup>48</sup> Even Shelley, on being drawn back to Greek literature in 1812, had to ask his bookseller Thomas

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44 R.W. King, The Translator of Dante: the Life, Work and Friendships of Henry Francis Cary (1772-1844), 223 and n.

45 The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt, 68.

46 The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt, 74.

47 The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt, ed. T. Hunt, I.79, 83-86.

48 C. Redding, Fifty Years' Recollections, I.54-55. He mentions Plutarch; but may have read Plutarch in the translation given him by his father, and not in Greek.



Hookham to send him editions of Greek authors which included translations in Latin or English, his grasp of Greek at that time obviously being weak.<sup>49</sup>

Those who entered the sixth form would, in most schools, find that their chief subject of study was Greek literature, no doubt because Latin literature had been so thoroughly drummed into them already. At Eton, and at the many schools following the Eton curriculum, this meant a close study of Greek drama. Etonians in the upper fifth and sixth forms devoted two extra hours per week, all year round, to the study of Greek plays, and this same subject took up all their time in the last week of term before the summer and winter holidays.<sup>50</sup> In addition, Dr Keate (who was headmaster from 1809 until 1834) delivered lectures on Greek drama, which were apparently of high quality and lasting value.<sup>51</sup> Figure 1 (p. 34) lists the textbooks and plays on the Eton syllabus. Burton's Pentalogia was out of print in 1798,<sup>52</sup> and was generally replaced by Pote's Pentalogia, which contained the Hippolytus, Medea, Philoctetes, Prometheus and Plutus.<sup>53</sup>

Other schools were similar. The wider reading-list at Christ's Hospital included Homer, Aristophanes and Greek tragedy.<sup>54</sup> At Westminster the boys read Homer and the tragedians (especially the four plays of Euripides edited by Porson).<sup>55</sup> Fynes Clinton

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49 The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. F.L. Jones, I.340, 343-44.

50 Lyte, 320.

51 Lyte, 394n, 395n.

52 Life of Butler, I.28.

53 Clarke, Greek Studies, 17.

54 Trollope, 183.

55 ER, liii (1831), 64-67.

felt that 'the most solid literary advantage' he had derived from his few years at Westminster was 'a taste for the Greek tragic poets' which he had acquired from reading four plays of Sophocles and two of Euripides.<sup>56</sup> At Harrow, the curriculum was much the same as at Eton, but with closer attention given to Greek metres and the Greek tragedians.<sup>57</sup> The Rugby timetable given to Dr Butler by Dr James allowed for only fifty lines of Greek drama per week, based on Burgess's edition of Burton's Pentalogia;<sup>58</sup> but Butler's timetable at Shrewsbury was more generous, no doubt because Butler had taken Dr James's advice and introduced Dalzel's Collectanea Majora.<sup>59</sup> Dr Kennedy, recalling his schooldays at Shrewsbury when Butler was headmaster, said that 'some Greek play was always in hand'.<sup>60</sup> Butler had also encouraged private reading, so that Kennedy had read, amongst other authors, all of Aeschylus and Sophocles and much of Aristophanes before going to university.<sup>61</sup>

The lesser-known grammar schools also found space for the tragedians. At Dorchester some Sophocles and Euripides was read; at Louth Grammar School, Lincoln, Porson's editions of Euripides were in use; at Appleby Parva, Leicestershire, the syllabus included a play of Sophocles or Euripides.<sup>62</sup> Most interesting of all was the work of Dr Valpy at Reading Grammar School. Until his retirement in 1830, it was customary for his scholars to recite

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56 Clinton, 8.

57 Carlisle, II.147.

58 Life of Butler, I.25-26.

59 Carlisle, II.389; Life of Butler, I.196-97. For Dalzel's textbook, see p. 35 above.

60 Life of Butler, I.252.

61 Life of Butler, I.252-53.

62 Carlisle, I.366, 737-38, 829-30.

speeches or perform plays on the occasion of the triennial visit of the School Visitors. Dr Valpy was particularly keen on the dramatic performances, and apart from Plautus and Shakespeare, some of Euripides' and Sophocles' plays were performed in Greek and 'with the strict costume of ancient Greece'.<sup>63</sup> Although Valpy's work was unique in his own time, he was not the first schoolmaster to have encouraged the performance of Greek plays. Dr Parr had presented performances of Oedipus Tyrannus in 1775 and Trachiniae in 1776 at Stanmore with considerable success; and would have continued to do so in later years if his school had not failed through lack of financial support.<sup>64</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was quite common for Greek school texts to have Latin translations appended. They cannot have been of much use to the average schoolboy, and not every teacher approved of them. Clinton's teacher at Southwell strongly disapproved of 'versions, clavises and all the pernicious helps by which the labour of learning is shortened to the student', and so influenced Clinton that he removed the Latin versions from all his own books.<sup>65</sup> Although the habit of teaching Greek through Latin was decreasing, Henry Nelson Coleridge found it necessary, as late as 1830, to criticise the die-hards, at Eton in particular, who clung to outmoded methods and persisted in using Latin translations, and not English ones, as a teaching aid. He himself

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63 Carlisle, I.37-38. A fuller account of Valpy's Greek play and its popular reception is given in Chapter 6 below.

64 Field, I.78-80. Although Parr was the first schoolmaster in England to present Greek plays, there had been a precedent in Ireland where Swift's friend Dr Sheridan had put on a Greek play.

65 Clinton, 9.

was not against the use of English translations, provided they were used with care, and provided that prose translations of verse authors were not used.<sup>66</sup> There were, however, very few separately printed verse translations of the plays most commonly read in schools,<sup>67</sup> although by the late 1820s there was a flourishing trade in prose 'cribs' of dubious quality, coming mainly from the pen of T.W.C. Edwards. His first 'crib', of the Medea, was published in 1821, with a preface announcing that it was to be the first of forty such translations. Apparently he made enough money from this translation to finance a holiday for himself, and returned from the holiday to find a deluge of requests for the other thirty-nine.<sup>68</sup> William Palin's translation of the Persae, the purpose of which was 'rather utility than elegance', was intended as the first of a series of parallel-text translations to help students.<sup>69</sup> Palin cannot have met with the same reception as Edwards, since the series was never continued.

As Parry demonstrates, these 'cribs' cannot in themselves have done much to convince their perplexed users that Greek tragedy was either comprehensible or even worth reading;<sup>70</sup> but it would be unfair to describe them as a permanent deterrent. The 'cribs' were, after all, intended as adjuncts to the plays in question, not as substitutes. A prose translation of poetry, written in stilted, unnatural English, if read on its own without comparison

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66 H.N. Coleridge, Introductions to the Study of the Greek Classic Poets, 16-17.

67 See Appendix 1.

68 Parry, 45.

69 See the account of Palin's translation in Chapter 9 below.

70 Parry, 45-46.

with the original poem, is worse than useless; but if the same translation is used in conjunction with the original text, it may help the struggling reader to gain just enough insight into the literary merits of the poem to transform the fog of incomprehension into the glimmerings of enlightenment. It is quite reasonable to suppose that, if readers of this kind wished in later life to further their acquaintance with Greek drama, they would welcome good verse translations.

Apart from the grammar and public schools, there were numerous small private schools, about which little is known, but whose curricula and teaching methods were probably much the same as those already described. Thomas Love Peacock went to a small private school at Englefield Green until he was about thirteen. Of his education there, Peacock said only that the classical teaching was excellent, and that the schoolmaster 'had the art of inspiring his pupils with a love of learning'.<sup>71</sup> Macaulay also attended a private school near Cambridge, where he studied Latin and Greek, but he has very little to say about his studies in his letters of that time.<sup>72</sup>

In Scotland, Greek was taught at a number of schools, but usually only at an elementary level, because the teaching of Greek was, and had long been, regarded as the prerogative of the universities.<sup>73</sup> A Royal Commission on the Scottish Universities

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71 The Works of Thomas Love Peacock, ed. H.F.B. Brett-Smith and C.E. Jones, VIII.259.

72 George Otto Trevelyan, The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay, I.38, 40, 81.

73 Clarke, Greek Studies, 41.

in 1826, whose report was published in 1830, recommended that Greek be taught at more schools, in order to raise the standards at the universities, but it took a long time for this recommendation to be implemented.<sup>74</sup> It is worth noting here that the age of entry to Scottish universities in the early nineteenth century was extremely low, the average age for matriculation being about fourteen years,<sup>75</sup> and that it was quite common for graduates of Scottish universities to go on to study at Oxford or Cambridge. There is no evidence to indicate what place Greek tragedy had in the curricula of Scottish schools or universities.

#### B. Education at Home

There were also many boys who were taught at home, either by their fathers or by private tutors. In such cases, the curriculum followed was much the same as in the schools, although the teaching methods might be more idiosyncratic, and the pupils had the doubtful benefit of more individual tuition. Quite a few of those who were privately tutored began Greek at an early age. Redding, for example, was eight when his father began to teach him Greek, having already taught him some Latin.<sup>76</sup> Coleridge was one of the very few who were convinced that Greek should be learned first,<sup>77</sup> and seems to have taught his sons accordingly. When Hartley was fourteen and Derwent ten, their father engaged a Mr Dawes as their tutor, and asked Dawes to teach them Greek before

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74 John Strong, A History of Secondary Education in Scotland, 174-75.

75 Strong, 158, 173-74.

76 Redding, Fifty Years' Recollections, I.10.

77 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, II.802; III.289. CSC, II.297.



Latin.<sup>78</sup> John Stuart Mill, who began Greek at the amazing age of three, five years before he knew any Latin, must surely be one of the youngest Greek scholars on record. For five years, he followed a rigorous programme devised by his father. First of all, he learned lists of vocabulary, then the main inflections of nouns and verbs. Thereafter, without previously learning any rules of syntax, he began reading Aesop's fables and then gradually more difficult prose authors, absorbing the conventions of Greek syntax as he went along. At the age of eight he progressed to Greek poetry, beginning with Homer, and thereafter reading some Greek plays.<sup>79</sup> By the age of ten he had read several plays of Aristophanes (Clouds, Frogs and Plutus), Euripides (Medea and Phoenissae) and Sophocles (Ajax, Electra and Philoctetes).<sup>80</sup> We need not be surprised to learn that he 'profited little' from reading Greek drama at this age,<sup>81</sup> and even when he returned to reading Euripides in 1841, he rather condescendingly said that the 'chief interest' of Greek drama was the 'correct & living picture' it furnished of Greek society and thought.<sup>82</sup>

Other home-taught boys, although expected to work hard, had less demanding taskmasters, and usually seem to have read more poetry than prose. Thomas Campbell spent three hours daily teaching his son Greek and Latin. His rather surprising statement that he

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78 Minnow among Tritons. Mrs S.T. Coleridge's Letters to Thomas Poole, 1799-1834, ed. S. Potter, 12.

79 John Stuart Mill, Autobiography, 3-4, 10-11.

80 The Earlier Letters of John Stuart Mill, 1812-1848, ed. F.E. Mineka, I.7-8.

81 Mill, Autobiography, 11.

82 Earlier Letters of J.S. Mill, II.469-70.

did so despite grave misgivings about the value of what he was doing may not have had root in any feeling that a classical education was useless, but possibly in an uneasy premonition of his son's mental instability.<sup>83</sup> Henry Francis Cary's twelve-year-old son Henry read nearly a quarter of the extant Greek tragedies, as well as most of Homer and a great deal of other Greek literature, in the space of one year.<sup>84</sup> In the last five months of 1832, Fynes Clinton and his son read eight plays of Euripides, four of Sophocles and three of Aeschylus.<sup>85</sup>

Such intensive study did not necessarily make Greek literature enjoyable as literature. Mill mentions that he gained moral instruction from his allotted reading, but says nothing about the pleasure of his task.<sup>86</sup> Young Henry Cary thought of Homer only as a lesson-book until he heard Coleridge discoursing on the beauty of Homer's poetry at the Carys' dinner-table.<sup>87</sup> One suspects that Mark Pattison was not alone in feeling the superficiality and lack of depth in the wide reading he had done with his father, particularly since his father had to rely on a 'crib' to correct his son's viva voce translations.<sup>88</sup>

Of those who were privileged to receive a classical education, some would leave school determined never to read a classical book again — even in translation. Another small group, possibly a

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83 Beattie, II.310.

84 Cary, II.24.

85 Clinton, 298.

86 Mill, Autobiography, 20. He read Greek and Latin 'not for the language merely, but also for the thoughts'.

87 Cary, II.18-19.

88 Mark Pattison, Memoirs, 62.

little more numerous, would have gained enough knowledge of the Greek language to enable its members to read Greek poetry, and to translate it, as a means of relaxation for the rest of their life.<sup>89</sup> Quite a few of these men — for example, Clinton, Campbell and Shelley — seem to have been particularly attracted to Greek tragedy. The majority were probably left with some kind of interest in Greek literature, but with so briefly acquired and so inadequate a grasp of the language that in later life they would have to resort to translations if they wanted to widen their knowledge of Greek poetry or renew their acquaintance with old friends. Since translation had taken up so much of their time at school, they might well be interested in the problems involved in translating verse, and even feel competent to pass judgement on the quality of the translations they read, just as Lamb was asked to comment on Lloyd's translation, Wordsworth sought Coleridge's opinion on his translation from the Aeneid<sup>90</sup> and Leigh Hunt valued Henry Brougham's advice on his translations from Horace and Catullus.<sup>91</sup> Those who had left school before they had the opportunity to read any Greek drama might possibly be curious to learn what they had missed, and for such men a translation would be invaluable.

All of this is not enough in itself to explain the considerable interest in translations of Greek drama during the period in question, since school education does not necessarily

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89 H.N. Coleridge, 33, suggests this was one of the principal benefits of a classical education.

90 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, V.353-54.

91 Correspondence of Leigh Hunt, I.58-65.

always determine the reading of former schoolboys in later life. What can be said, however, is that at school a dormant seed was planted, which needed only the right environment to burst into flower.

### C. University Education

In the eighteenth century the quality of university education in England was so bad that those whose classical education ended when they left school were better served than those who went on to Oxford or Cambridge. Professors regarded their posts as mere sinecures, teaching was at a very elementary level, and there was little guidance for students in their choice of reading matter.<sup>92</sup> The early years of the nineteenth century seem to have been little better, for when Procter left school, his father decided to send him to study law under a country solicitor rather than send him to university, acting on the advice of a friend who asserted that he himself had learned nothing at Oxford, and that his son had learned only idleness.<sup>93</sup>

As the new century progressed, the situation improved, but only slowly and unevenly. The reason for this change seems to have been the new seriousness in the country brought about by the religious revival and the Napoleonic Wars,<sup>94</sup> and manifested in the frequent attacks on the appalling standards at the universities.<sup>95</sup> The most tangible result of this criticism was the introduction of written examinations. At Oxford, a B.A. examination was

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92 Clarke, Greek Studies, 25. See also Archer, 5-9.

93 Procter, 24-25.

94 Archer, 12.

95 See, for example, ER, xvi (1810), 158-87, and Edward Copleston, A Reply to the Calumnies of the Edinburgh Review against Oxford.

established in 1800, including an oral examination on classical authors selected by the candidate. In 1807 a separate Honours School in Literae Humaniores was set up, with written work added to the oral work. Candidates chose their authors from a list which eventually became stereotyped, and in which Greek poetry was represented by the tragedians (and sometimes also by Aristophanes).<sup>96</sup> At Cambridge a written Tripos examination was introduced in 1766, but there was no separate Classical Tripos until 1824. Prescribed authors invariably included some Greek tragedy, but the examination itself was not much more than a test of the candidate's ability to translate into and from English. Earlier than this, Cambridge had included Greek in its scholarship examinations; of the two Greek authors set, one was usually either Sophocles or Euripides.<sup>97</sup>

Apart from these university examinations, individual colleges also had their own internal examinations, introduced at various dates. One of the earliest was Trinity College, Cambridge, where annual examinations were established in 1789-1798.<sup>98</sup> In his account of life at Trinity in 1815-1819,<sup>99</sup> John Wright included some examples of these examination papers. The 1816 paper on Hecuba is typical. It examined candidates closely on their background knowledge (lives of the tragedians, development of tragedy, meaning of various technical terms, use of mythology), as well as on their knowledge of the plot and characters of the play itself. This was followed by questions on metre, textual criticism, vocabulary,

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96 Clarke, Classical Education, 98-103.

97 Clarke, Classical Education, 104-06.

98 Clarke, Greek Studies, 34-35.

99 [John Wright], Alma Mater; or, Seven Years at the University of Cambridge.

accentuation, syntax and translation (of Greek passages from the play into English, and into Latin hexameters and lyric metres). There was no attempt to assess anything other than the candidates' ability to memorise facts: if they had acquired any appreciation of the play as literature, this was purely coincidental and of no interest to the examiners. Stamina was as essential as a capacious memory, since there was no time limit fixed. Examinations began at 3 p.m., and the candidates could keep writing until it was too dark to see.<sup>100</sup>

The introduction of examinations was a mixed blessing. Although it was certainly a factor in the improvement of scholarship,<sup>101</sup> it also meant that students were encouraged to specialise too narrowly in the authors and passages most likely to be examined.<sup>102</sup> 'All things — prizes, scholarships, and fellowships, are bestowed, not on the greatest readers, but on those who, without any assistance, can produce most knowledge upon paper.'<sup>103</sup> Nor did these examinations guarantee better teaching. Of his experience at Oriel College, Oxford, in 1832, Mark Pattison commented:

A college lecture in those days meant the class construing, in turns, some twenty lines of a classical text to the tutor, who corrected you when you were wrong. Of the value as intellectual gymnastic of this exercise there can be no question; the failure as education lay in the circumstance that this one exercise was about the whole of what our teachers ever attempted to do for us.<sup>104</sup>

Pattison was particularly disgusted when he realised that G.A.

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100 Alma Mater, I.240-48.

101 Archer, 9.

102 Adamson, 80-81.

103 Alma Mater, I.6.

104 Pattison, 64.



Dennison, who was reputed to be a good scholar, was lecturing on Alcestis and Hippolytus entirely from Monk's editions of the plays. This may have been done as much from practical necessity as from idleness, since — apart from Pattison himself — not one of Dennison's students had taken the trouble to read Monk's notes, which were in Latin.<sup>105</sup> Monk himself does not seem to have been any more inspiring as a lecturer, according to Wright, who attended Monk's lectures on the Septem. At the first meeting, Monk merely noted his students' names and told them to return the following day prepared to construe the opening lines of the play, and to answer questions on the setting, plot and characters. On the following day, Monk delivered an introductory lecture on Greek drama, which seems from Wright's summary to be pretty much what any competent person could have put together from the standard reference books of the time.<sup>106</sup> Monk, like Dennison, probably knew his students' reading habits well enough to see no point in exerting himself unduly and unprofitably.

It is clear from Alma Mater that idleness was still the major occupation at Cambridge. Pattison's account of Oriel College in 1832, when compared with Hogg's account of University College in 1810, shows that there was little real change at Oxford.<sup>107</sup> But those who wished to work, and who were prepared to do so without guidance, could find plenty to do. Wright's first-year reading-list gave special attention to Greek tragedy, and to the Septem and Hecuba in particular. The books recommended to him by his

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105 Pattison, 64-66.

106 Alma Mater, I.119, 129-33.

107 Compare Pattison, 69, with Hogg, Life of Shelley, 173.

tutor were all well-tried eighteenth-century favourites: Dawes's Miscellanea Critica, Barthélemy's Travels of Anacharsis, Francklin's translation of Sophocles (mainly for the introductory essay on Greek drama), Brumoy's Greek Theatre and Tyrwhitt's Aristotle, all of which Wright found 'as entertaining and instructive to the full, as is Homer's catalogue of ships'.<sup>108</sup> If they seemed so to as studious a person as Wright, how repellent they must have been to his more indolent companions! One suspects that Clarke's glowing account of the gargantuan reading-lists, offered by Parr to his godson and by Butler to a former pupil is a very optimistic view of the true picture.<sup>109</sup>

Those who did work would find most of their attention directed to Greek rather than Latin. A correspondent of Butler's in 1829 told him that there had been for some years a tendency at Oxford for students to be more familiar with Greek literature, and that he was reliably informed that the situation was the same at Cambridge.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, Greek drama took up more than its fair share of the syllabus and examination time. The preparatory reading of young men about to start their university education seemed to consist of little else,<sup>111</sup> and even the idlers seem to have been more inclined to read Greek tragedy than anything else. In 1825 Thomas Lovell Beddoes told a friend: 'Oxford is the most indolent place on earth — I have fairly done nothing in the world but read a play or two of Schiller, Aeschylus, & Euripides.'<sup>112</sup>

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108 Alma Mater, I.120-21.

109 Clarke, Greek Studies, 36-37.

110 Life of Butler, I.352-53.

111 See notes 30 and 61 above, and compare Life, Journals and Letters of Henry Alford, ed. F. Alford, 32.

112 The Works of Thomas Lovell Beddoes, ed. H.W. Donner, 604.



This preference for Greek was the result of the long-overdue improvement in English classical scholarship, which began with Porson, and which followed Porson's lead in its concentration on Greek drama.

Porson's earliest work was an edition of Aeschylus, but he abandoned it because the Cambridge University Press had insisted that he retain the old text of Stanley and include all the useless notes of Pauw. In 1795 an unauthorised edition of Porson's text was published by Foulis of Glasgow, and another edition was published in 1806 with what Clarke calls Porson's 'half-faced consent'. Meantime, he had turned his attention to Euripides, his favourite author, but completed and published editions only of Hecuba (1797), Orestes (1798), Phoenissae (1799) and Medea (1801).<sup>113</sup> But he showed no interest in literary criticism, except in his Praelectio (1792), which does no more than summarise the traditional virtues and vices of Euripides.<sup>114</sup> Indeed, according to Mary Russell Mitford, who in early life had been a close friend of Porson's step-daughter, Porson seemed to care more for his 'new readings' than for the literary qualities of Euripides.<sup>115</sup> The importance of his work is rather in his study of metre (although he did little on the tragic choruses) and his brilliant textual emendations.

His influence ensured that his successors continued to work on the editing of Greek drama. Writing in the Quarterly Review in 1812, Blomfield remarked on the fact that in the past six years at least eleven editions of various portions of the dramatists had

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113 Clarke, Greek Studies, 70-75.

114 Parry, 39-40.

115 Letters of Mary Russell Mitford, ed. H. Chorley, II.213.

been published, excluding reprints, whereas the whole of the eighteenth century had produced only about a dozen altogether. Blomfield attributed this in part to the proportion of Greek in education, and in part to Porson's influence.<sup>116</sup> E.H. Barker also saw Porson's influence in the way in which 'the tide of English scholarship was running fast in favour of the Greek drama', and of metrical and textual analysis.<sup>117</sup>

Porson's three chief successors at Cambridge were Dobree, Blomfield and Monk. Monk and Blomfield edited Porson's Adversaria and the periodical Museum Criticum. Monk seems also to have seen himself as carrying on Porson's work on Euripides, in producing editions of Hippolytus (1811) and Alcestis (1816) and — many years later, while Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol — Iphigeneia in Aulide (1840) and Iphigeneia in Tauris (1845). Dobree published Porson's notes on Aristophanes in 1820, as well as a text of Plutus which was partly his own and partly Porson's. His Adversaria, published in 1831 and 1833, gives considerable space to notes on Euripides, Aristophanes and Athenaeus.<sup>118</sup>

As scholars, these two were less important than Blomfield, whose particular interest was in Aeschylus. His editions of five out of the seven plays, Prometheus (1810), Septem (1812), Persae (1814), Agamemnon (1818) and Choephoroe (1824), were all printed in the new Porson Greek type, which is a positive pleasure to read, and included glossaries as well as the usual textual emendation and annotation.<sup>119</sup> They therefore did much to stimulate interest in

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116 QR, viii (1812), 215.

117 E.H. Barker, Literary Anecdotes and Contemporary Reminiscences of Professor Porson and Others, I.xx-xxi. See also GM, lxxxiii<sup>1</sup> (1813), 451-52; lxxxvi<sup>1</sup> (1816), 343.

118 Clarke, Greek Studies, 86-87, 88-90.

119 Clarke, Greek Studies, 87-88.

Aeschylus, since they made that author accessible in good, readable editions for the first time. Coleridge, who had borrowed copies of the Persae and Prometheus from Cary in 1817, found them 'delightful editions'.<sup>120</sup> Elizabeth Barrett had used Bothe's edition for her translation of Prometheus in 1832, but when she borrowed a copy of Blomfield's edition from her mentor H.S. Boyd, she immediately regretted not having had it by her while she was working on her translation.<sup>121</sup>

Another scholar with a particular interest in Aeschylus was Dr Samuel Butler, although he is better known as the reforming headmaster of Shrewsbury School. For his edition of Aeschylus, he was forced by the Cambridge University Press to use the text of Stanley which Porson had spurned. His edition had a mixed reception. Reviewers welcomed a new edition of the dramatist, but regretted the use of an outdated text.<sup>122</sup> Blomfield's criticism in the Edinburgh Review was, as Clarke points out,<sup>123</sup> particularly severe, but this was only to be expected from one currently working on his own edition of the same author. The response of the intelligent general reader is difficult to determine. Elizabeth Barrett was acquainted with several editions of Aeschylus, but not, apparently, with that of Butler.<sup>124</sup>

Oxford's best scholars at this time were Elmsley and Gaisford.

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120 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, IV.781.

121, Diary, 223. For Elizabeth Barrett's translation of Prometheus, see Chapter 10.

122 The reviews are listed in Appendix 3.

123 Clarke, Greek Studies, 92.

124 She was acquainted with the editions of Porson, Blomfield, Bothe, Scholefield and Schutz. See Diary, 15, 222, 223, 226, 230.

Gaisford's interest in Greek tragedy did not extend beyond editing school editions of Euripides, but Elmsley devoted most of his life to the study of the drama, and to Sophocles and Euripides in particular. His editions of Oedipus Tyrannus and Oedipus Coloneus were published in 1811 and 1823 respectively; of the plays of Euripides, he edited Heracleidae (1813), Medea (1818) and Bacchae (1821). Like Blomfield, he also wrote on Greek drama for the Edinburgh Review, the Quarterly Review, the Classical Journal and Museum Criticum.<sup>125</sup>

One wonders how much of this scholarly industry impinged on the consciousness of the average 'culture vulture' of the time. Even the reviews of new editions in the Edinburgh and Quarterly spent most time dissecting the editor's choice of text and variant readings, with only the most cursory preliminary remarks on the literary significance of the author and his play.<sup>126</sup> Such articles may have looked impressive, and may have been read by the acquaintances and rivals of the scholarly contributor, but few others can have had the time or patience to read such dull stuff.

The unfortunate fact is that in the early years of the nineteenth century there was a growing gulf between the world of scholarship and the world of literature, something which would have been unthinkable in the eighteenth century when the classical scholar was accepted in the literary world, and there was no rivalry between one branch of learning and another. In the

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125 Clarke, Greek Studies, 97-100.

126 Few of the reviews listed in Appendix 3 do more than pay lip-service to the literary merits of Greek tragedy.



Romantic period, classical scholarship became more specialised, and began to look on texts as scientific specimens rather than works of literature.<sup>127</sup> The fragmentation of Homer is one example of this trend; Porsonian criticism is another. No wonder few of even the best students left university with a taste for classical learning, or kept up their reading afterwards.<sup>128</sup> No wonder Procter felt he owed more to his reading of eighteenth-century fiction than to his almost forgotten classical education.<sup>129</sup>

Peacock, whose pride in his self-gained knowledge of Greek literature was matched by his contempt for the universities, was particularly scathing. His character Desmond in Melincourt (1817), who had 'profited little at the University', denounced university education as time wasted in the 'microscopic study of philological minutiae' instead of in using Greek simply 'as the means of understanding Homer and Aeschylus'.<sup>130</sup> In his unpublished 'Essay on Fashionable Literature' written at about the same time, Peacock made a similar attack on 'the very ingenious process of academical chemistry which separates reason from grammar, taste from prosody, philosophy from philology, and absorbs all perception of the charms of the former in tedium and disgust at the drudgery of the latter.'<sup>131</sup> A glance at the sale catalogue of Peacock's library is a reminder that Peacock was familiar with the most recent scholarly works and was accustomed to 'reading the best books,

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127 M.L. Clarke, Richard Porson: a Biographical Essay, 34; Levin, 26-28.

128 Clinton, 228-29.

129 Procter, 25-28.

130 Works of T.L. Peacock, II.130-33.

131 Works of T.L. Peacock, VIII.271-72.

illustrated by the best critics'.<sup>132</sup> He had no objection to scholarship, provided it was kept in its proper place.

As for the Scottish universities, which have already been briefly mentioned (pp. 42-43), standards were so low that scholarship, even second-rate scholarship, was non-existent.<sup>133</sup> Judging by Lockhart's trenchant criticism of Edinburgh University in Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk, any student who left with any appreciation of Greek literature whatsoever must have been a rare bird indeed.<sup>134</sup> Lockhart himself had been educated at Glasgow University, where he won the Greek medal, before going on to Oxford University.<sup>135</sup> He may well have thought that standards at Glasgow were higher than at Edinburgh, but this does not explain why Robert Morehead studied first at Glasgow, where he won three prizes for Greek, then transferred himself to Edinburgh University for a year or two before also going on to Oxford.<sup>136</sup>

It is just possible that some of the contemporary scholastic preference for Greek tragedy may have come to the attention of the reading public, and that publishers might therefore feel that there was a market for translations. But it seems more likely that the main contribution of the universities was the provision of up-to-date texts, set in readable type, and offering more

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132 Works of T.L. Peacock, VIII.259.

133 Clarke, Greek Studies, 41-45.

134 John Gibson Lockhart, Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk, 49-54.

135 Marion Lochhead, John Gibson Lockhart, 9-19. For Lockhart's translations from Greek tragedy, see Chapter 8.

136 Charles Morehead, Memorials of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Robert Morehead, 44, 60, 66-67. For Morehead's translations from Greek tragedy, see Chapters 8 and 9.

helpful notes for the use of the translators. The influence of Porson and his successors saw to it that the most scholarly readers of Greek tragedy were the least capable of perceiving and communicating the poetic worth of what they read. It was those who had left their schooldays behind them with least regret, or who were not confronted with the rigours of scholarship until they had developed an unforced love of the classics, who were the most likely to read and enjoy the Greek tragedians for their poetry, and the least likely to approach the task of poetic translation with a frosty and pedantic hand.

### CHAPTER 3. NON-CLASSICAL EDUCATION

I wish very much that some day or other you may have time to learn Greek. . . . Even a little of it is like manure to the soil of the mind, and makes it bear finer flowers.

Memoir and Letters of Sara Coleridge, I.169.

As a general rule the classics had no place in the education of women, middle-class youths intended for a commercial career, or the working classes. And yet quite a few of those so deprived seem to have felt that they had been denied something of value, and to have tried to make good their loss. Admittedly, almost the only kind of recognised education in those days, beyond the learning of the three Rs, was an education in Latin and Greek, and there was a tendency to honour merely the knowledge of the classical languages for its own sake, rather than to value the literature thus made available,<sup>1</sup> but there was no shortage of people who would have agreed that even a little knowledge of Greek was a valuable asset. How many of these people were prepared simply to read Greek literature in translation, rather than make the effort to learn the language and read the original works?

#### A. The Working Classes

All that need be said about working-class women is that they had neither the leisure, the inclination nor the encouragement needed either to learn Greek or to read Greek literature in

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Sydney Smith's remarks in ER, xv (1809-10), 46-47.

translation. Female emancipation may have been stirring in higher ranks of society, but the status of women was still enshrouded in the Stygian gloom of ignorance. Working-class men can also be fairly quickly eliminated. Richard Altick's account of the reading habits of the working classes shows that, although many did learn to read in the early nineteenth century, few retained the ability for long, because it had been inadequately learned and insufficiently practised. Those who did read could do so only at the end of a long and exhausting day of work and generally preferred to read novels, which made no great demands on their powers of concentration, or political pamphlets, which appealed to their feelings of grievance and sense of repression.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the reading material available to them was circumscribed by their poverty. New books at the beginning of the century were shockingly expensive by middle- and upper-class standards, and even in the 1830s, when cheap 'libraries' at about five shillings per volume were transforming the book trade, few working men would have willingly spent so much money, which might be their entire week's wages, on such an inessential item as a book.<sup>3</sup> The artisan who did without sugar in his tea in order to afford the Penny Magazine<sup>4</sup> would have found even the cheapest new books too costly and would have had to make do with the dusty old second-hand volumes and occasional remaindered stock which came within his means.<sup>5</sup> As far

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2 Altick, 141-72.

3 See Charles Knight, The Old Printer and the Modern Press, 238-58; and Altick, 260-77.

4 Passages, II.182-83. The artisan in question was Christopher Thomson, author of Autobiography of an Artisan.

5 Altick, 252-54.

as concerns translations of tragedy, this would have meant a reliance on the old eighteenth-century translations by Potter, Francklin and Wodhull, rather than an interest in the new translations being published. The Mechanics' Institutes and Working Men's Reading Clubs so frequently established at this time preferred to buy 'improving' books such as those published under the auspices of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and would probably have grudged shelf space to translations of any works of Greek literature.<sup>6</sup>

Most of the working men in this period who published their autobiographies were, naturally enough, concerned mainly to write about working conditions and the growing demand for reform. Few had had the opportunity to study the classics at school, and fewer still had the talent and persistence to teach themselves. Charles Manby Smith, a compositor, was lucky enough to have two years at a grammar school in his native Devon, but soon forgot the little Greek he learned there. He stubbornly clung on to his knowledge of Latin, not because it ever earned him a penny, but simply because he was proud of an accomplishment so rare in one of his class.<sup>7</sup> Another compositor, whom Smith met in London, was a specialist in setting up Greek type, but was apparently more interested in getting drunk daily and bilking his employers than in the finer points of Greek literature.<sup>8</sup>

Although Smith himself made no attempt to regain and further his acquaintance with Greek, he mentions a compositor he knew in

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6 Altick, 217, 269-71.

7 Charles Manby Smith, The Working-Man's Way in the World, 3.

8 Working-Man's Way, 169-72.



Paris who had taught himself enough Latin to read Horace and enough Greek to read the Iliad.<sup>9</sup> An even more impressive autodidact was Thomas Cooper, who began his working life as a shoemaker's apprentice in Leicester in 1820. He chanced to read about Dr Samuel Lee, Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, who had once been an apprentice carpenter. At the age of eleven, Lee had started to teach himself Latin, and by the age of twenty-six had learned Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Syriac. Cooper was inspired by this example to begin learning Latin, Greek and Hebrew in his spare time, using books bought second-hand.<sup>10</sup> After three years he fell ill and had to give up shoemaking. Instead, he opened a small school which was attended mainly by children from poor families. His attempts to teach Latin to some of the boys met with considerable parental opposition: 'I want our Jack to larn to write a good hand. What's the use of his larning Latin? It will nivver be no use to him.' But he persevered with some of his best pupils, and even taught two of them a little Greek.<sup>11</sup> He had the opportunity some years later to improve his own knowledge of Greek while serving a jail sentence as a result of his Chartist activities, but he does not mention which authors he read.<sup>12</sup> While Cooper was living in Lincoln in 1836-1838 he made friends with another self-taught scholar, a bank clerk called Gilbert Collins who eventually became manager of the Hull Branch Bank at Lincoln. Collins had learned some Latin at school, but had taught himself Greek, and had even

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9 Working-Man's Way, 65.

10 The Life of Thomas Cooper: Written by Himself, 55-56.

11 Life of Thomas Cooper, 67-76, 104.

12 Life of Thomas Cooper, 252. Compare Leigh Hunt in Surrey Gaol, p. 37 above.

amused himself by translating the whole of the Iliad and Odyssey.<sup>13</sup>

These admittedly limited examples seem to suggest that working men who seriously desired an education saw a knowledge of Greek as a sine qua non; but that their knowledge of Greek may not have taken them much beyond the simpler authors. Their determination to learn the original language may well have ensured that they avoided translations because they saw them as an unacceptable second best. This at any rate was the advice given to ambitious but uneducated men in a book published under the auspices of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in 1830:

The man whose knowledge of the literature of another age or country is confined to translations is in the situation of the untravelled reader who may, indeed, learn something of foreign lands from the descriptions of those who have visited them; but a person familiar with the language of another people has that sort of access to their literature, which one would have to the general knowledge of their country and their manners, who should be in possession of the talisman of eastern fiction, by which he could transport himself thither at a wish.<sup>14</sup>

#### B. Businessmen

It is not always possible to draw a clear dividing line between men who rise from working-class origins and men whose background is solidly middle-class. Nor is it possible to distinguish clearly between those men who had learned classics at school, and those who made a living in the world of commerce. Especially at the beginning of the century there were boys, such as Peacock and Lamb, who had had an elementary classical education

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13 Life of Thomas Cooper, 118.

14 George L. Craik, The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties, I.365-66. Compare also Henry Jenkyns, A Lecture on the Advantages of Classical Studies, 16-18.

and who went on to take a job in an office or counting-house. Even in 1819, as H.F. Chorley complained, most of the boys at the school of the Royal Institution in Liverpool were following 'the fashion of the time' in learning Latin and Greek although they were intended for a commercial career. Chorley himself felt that his own classical education was useless, and that an apprenticeship of some kind would have been better for him.<sup>15</sup> Continuing criticism ensured that fewer boys were learning Greek, and that the standard education of future shopkeepers and businessmen comprised arithmetic and calligraphy and perhaps a little Latin. For them, Greek would have been 'a great intellectual luxury',<sup>16</sup> for which most parents were not prepared to pay.

Probably many boys were happy to forego the pleasures thus denied them, but Charles Knight, publisher and early member of the SDUK, regretted that at school he had got no further than some elementary Latin before being removed at the age of fourteen to be apprenticed to his father.<sup>17</sup> When his schoolmaster protested at such a promising pupil being taken from him, Knight's father replied simply that his son 'had acquired enough knowledge to fit [him] for his station in life'.<sup>18</sup> Although Knight was aggrieved at being denied the opportunity to learn Greek, he apparently did not attempt in later life to make good his loss, and if he made

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15 H.F. Chorley: Autobiography, Memoir and Letters, I.43-44.

16 Edward Lytton Bulwer, England and the English, I.272; see also I.288. In his pamphlet Classical Education Reformed, Charles Rann Kennedy proposed severe reductions in the amount of classics taught in order to make room for subjects of more practical application. Altick, 174-75, also comments on the utilitarian education given to the sons of businessmen.

17 Passages, I.55.

18 Passages, I.67.

extensive use of translations of Greek literature, he has not thought fit to tell us so, apart from mentioning his reading of Taylor's translations of Proclus and Plotinus.<sup>19</sup> The articles on Greek tragedy in Knight's Penny Magazine<sup>20</sup> were not necessarily written by him.

John Murray II, who was to become the most successful publisher of his time, also had a father with very firm ideas on what sort of education was required for his son's future commercial career. When John Murray I sent his son to Dr Roberts's school at Kennington, he requested that he be taught 'Latin, French, Arithmetic, Mercantile Accounts, Elocution, History, Geography, Geometry, Astronomy, the Globes, Mathematics, Philosophy, Dancing, and Martial Exercises',<sup>21</sup> — but no Greek. Although John Murray II was, as his biographer put it, 'not a finished scholar',<sup>22</sup> he took a considerable interest in classical literature. In 1806 he and the Edinburgh printer Ballantyne contemplated a joint publication of a series of classical translations, with the possible assistance of Sir Walter Scott. Thomas Campbell was also consulted, and expressed a willingness to use his long experience 'in the original and translated authors' to assist Murray as far as possible.<sup>23</sup> The scheme was abandoned, no doubt because Murray's keen business brain told him that the time was not yet right for such a venture, but Murray retained an interest in translation. Between 1800 and

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19 Passages, I.215.

20 See Appendix 5 and Chapter 5 below.

21 Samuel Smiles, A Publisher and his Friends. Memoir and Correspondence of the Late John Murray, I.23.

22 Smiles, I.30.

23 Smiles, I.85, 325.

1840 he published several new translations of Greek poetry, including Bland's translations from the Greek Anthology,<sup>24</sup> Mitchell's translations of Aristophanes<sup>25</sup> and Sotheby's translation of the Iliad.<sup>26</sup> He was also interested in the possibility of publishing Frere's translations from Aristophanes, Frere having promised in 1818 that he would consult Murray about when and where they were to be published, once they were finished.<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately, few businessmen other than Knight and Murray have left much record of their education and literary interests, despite the wealth of biography and autobiography that flowed from the presses in the nineteenth century. No doubt many of them had more pressing matters to consider than how to compensate for their lack of a classical education, but there may have been at least a few who, like Mr Thornton in North and South, decided to learn Greek once they had established themselves and their families in prosperity, and no longer had to give all their attention to 'the struggle for bread'.<sup>28</sup> Other men with less determination than Thornton, but with an equal interest in the Greeks, could read translations or the many articles in the periodical press. Charles Knight certainly did not think that the study of literature and commercial life were incompatible,<sup>29</sup> and in 1818 Thomas Mitchell told Murray that the article which he had written for the

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24 Collections from the Greek Anthology, and from the Pastoral, Elegiac, and Dramatic Poets of Greece, by the Rev. R. Bland, and others (new edition, London, 1813). Murray did not print the first (1806) edition, but printed this and the third (1833) edition.

25 The Comedies of Aristophanes, by T. Mitchell (London, 1820-22).

26 The Iliad of Homer, translated by W. Sotheby (London, 1831).

27 Smiles, II.25.

28 Elizabeth Gaskell, North and South, ed. Angus Easson, 85.

29 Passages, I.205.

Quarterly Review on Greek philosophy<sup>30</sup> had been given a 'light entrance' in the hope of enticing the unscholarly to read it. He wanted to attract readers of Murray's 'class', by which he meant 'men of general intelligence and education, but whom other avocations have prevented from entering more deeply into the more mechanical parts of the learned languages'.<sup>31</sup> Valpy's Family Classical Library, which began in 1830, would have drawn at least some readers from 'the multitudes who have been called in early youth to mercantile or agricultural pursuits; or to the bewitching dissipations, and all-engrossing duties of the army and navy', if the enthusiastic reviewer in the New Monthly Magazine is to be believed.<sup>32</sup> Despite the lack of corroborating evidence, it seems fair to assume that the most successful periodicals of the nineteenth century would not have continued to publish articles on Greek literature, and the best publishers of the day would not have continued to publish Greek literature in translation, if men of Murray's 'class' showed no interest in reading them.<sup>33</sup>

### C. Women

In the early nineteenth century women of the middle and upper classes were expected to complement their menfolk as the rose does the thorn. Men were by nature rough, uncivilised brutes, to be improved by association with the gentler sex, whose education should be regulated accordingly:

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30 'View of Grecian Philosophy. — The Clouds, &c', QR, xxi (1819), 271-320.

31 Smiles, II.20.

32 NMM, xxx (1830), 142.

33 The continuing popularity of the classics is well illustrated by Chapters 5 and 6 below.



Much of the happiness of domestic life, and almost all that distinguishes a civilized from a barbarous people, depend upon the cultivation of the minds of women. Their influence over man is exactly proportioned to the expansion of their intellect, and the character and dignity of a nation might be pretty correctly ascertained by any one who had a competent knowledge of the attainments and condition of the women.<sup>34</sup>

Although it was still customary for most upper-class girls to be educated at home,<sup>35</sup> there was a growing number of girls' schools and seminaries, attended mainly by the daughters of professional men. These varied in size and pretensions, but the subjects most commonly taught, apart from the three Rs, were drawing, music and French. Girls taught at home would have much the same curriculum, although the ideal governess able to teach all the usual subjects was rarely to be found.<sup>36</sup> The school run by Miss Pinkerton, the 'Semiramis of Hammersmith' in Vanity Fair, was fairly typical in its curriculum of music, dancing, orthography, needlework, geography, deportment, religion, French and drawing;<sup>37</sup> but Miss Pinkerton herself, for all her airs, could not even speak French.<sup>38</sup> Some schools, such as the one attended by Mary Russell Mitford, also offered Latin as an extra,<sup>39</sup> but probably not Greek. Greek, indeed, seems to have been rarely available in girls' schools, apart from the school in Paris attended by Fanny Kemble. Here,

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34 NMM, xxx (1830), 143.

35 Alicia C. Percival, The English Miss Today and Yesterday, 25. See also Cruse, 78-92.

36 Frances Broadhurst, 'A Word in Favor of Female Schools', The Pamphleteer, xxvii (1827), 458.

37 William Makepeace Thackeray, Vanity Fair, ed. G & K. Tillotson, 12, 16, 20.

38 Vanity Fair, 16.

39 A.G. L'Estrange, The Life of Mary Russell Mitford, Related in a Selection from her Letters to her Friends, I.14-15.

Fanny Kemble learned Latin and began Greek, not so much from any love of the classics as from a desire to emulate an admired schoolfellow.<sup>40</sup>

It seems to have been widely assumed that although women could, and often did, learn more than one modern language, and might even be capable of learning a little Latin, Greek was intellectually beyond their grasp. It was also argued, rather illogically, that because women did not study the classics, they were obviously mentally incapable of doing so. The few women who persisted in serious intellectual study were liable to be regarded as curiosities, as Anthelia Melincourt was regarded by Mr Fax when he learned that she spent most of her days studiously occupied in the library:

'Locks herself up in the library!' said Mr Fax: 'A young lady, a beauty, and an heiress, in the nineteenth century, think of cultivating her understanding!' 'Strange but true', said Mr Hippy.<sup>41</sup>

Byron, who had strong personal reasons for disliking intellectual women, introduces us in Don Juan to

That prodigy, Miss Araminta Smith  
(Who at sixteen translated Hercules Furens  
Into as furious English),<sup>42</sup>

but says nothing more about her. A male friend of Sara Coleridge marvelled 'how a woman's faculties could have grappled with those Greek philosophers and Greek fathers', in view of the 'arduous

40 Frances Ann Kemble, Record of a Girlhood, I.99-100.

41 Works of T.L. Peacock, II.162.

42 Don Juan, XI.52; cited by R. Jenkyns, The Victorians and Ancient Greece, 63, in his remarks about attitudes to women who knew Greek (pp. 63-64). Jenkyns also has a most interesting chapter (pp. 112-32) on the influence of Greek, especially Greek tragedy, on the writings of George Eliot.

character' of classical studies.<sup>43</sup> Such intellectual pursuits were, moreover, frequently regarded as endangering a woman's prospects of marriage. Sara Coleridge, for one, was warned by her brother Hartley that 'Latin and celibacy go together', but she cheerfully ignored him<sup>44</sup> — and eventually proved him wrong.

More enlightened men, who could see no harm in women learning Greek, accused their brothers of jealousy and fear of seeming inferior to well-educated women. In an article on 'Female Education' in the Edinburgh Review in 1810, Sydney Smith criticised both the 'pompous pedants' who feared that their own reputation for learning would be diminished if it became known that young ladies could become equally proficient in the minutiae of Greek grammar and dialects; and the 'ignorant' men who were unwilling to see themselves being mentally outclassed by those they regarded as their intellectual inferiors.<sup>45</sup> Peacock put a similar criticism into the mouth of Mr Forester, the character in Melincourt whom he modelled on Shelley:

The conduct of men, in this respect, is much like that of a gardener who should plant a plot of ground with merely ornamental flowers, and then pass sentence on the soil for not bearing substantial fruit. If women are treated only as pretty dolls, and dressed in all the fripperies of irrational education; if the vanity of personal adornment and superficial accomplishments be made from their very earliest years to suppress all mental aspirations, and to supersede all thoughts of intellectual beauty, is it to be inferred that they are incapable of better things? But such is the usual logic of tyranny, which first places its extinguisher on the flame, and then argues that it cannot burn.<sup>46</sup>

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43 Memoir and Letters of Sara Coleridge, I.49.

44 Minnow among Tritons: Mrs S.T. Coleridge's Letters to Thomas Poole, 1799-1834, ed. Stephen Potter, 82.

45 ER, xv (1809-10), 304.

46 Works of T.L. Peacock, II.165.

The generally discouraging attitude of society at large seems to have ensured that many women took it for granted that they were not capable of learning Greek. Even those who wanted to learn Latin could meet resistance, as Mary Russell Mitford found when she sought her father's permission to do so.<sup>47</sup> Although she got her own way, and began to learn Latin, she cannot have profited much from her study, since she had apparently never read Ovid and knew Virgil only in Dryden's translation.<sup>48</sup> One suspects that once she began to find the going a little arduous, she simply took this as proof that the female brain could not cope, and gave up the struggle. In Belford Regis she even defined men as 'the sex that learns Latin and Greek'.<sup>49</sup>

The girls who did learn Greek were either self-taught or had private tuition, and invariably had the full approval of their fathers to encourage them; but the vast majority with an interest in languages preferred modern languages to the classics. Figure 2 (p. 72) offers a reasonably representative sample of fourteen women and the languages they learned. There is some evidence to suggest that it became commoner for women to learn Greek as the nineteenth century advanced, but to prove this satisfactorily would require more extensive research than the limits of this thesis permit. Such women as Anna Seward, Maria Edgeworth and Anne Radcliffe, who were educated in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, knew nothing of the classics. At any rate it was generally, and fairly, assumed that most women had no classical

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47 L'Estrange, I.14-15.

48 L'Estrange, I.25-26; II.57.

49 Mary Russell Mitford, Belford Regis: or Sketches of a Country Town, I.302.

Figure 2 Languages Learned by Fourteen Women Educated 1800-1840

	Fr	Ge	Gr	He	It	La	Po	Sp
1 Sarah Austin (b. 1793)	x	x			x	x		
2 Elizabeth Barrett (b. 1806)	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
3 Claire Clairmont (b. 1798)	x	x	x		x	x		x
4 Sara Coleridge (b. 1802)	x	x	x		x	x		x
5 Emma Darwin (b. 1808)	x	x			x			
6 Lucie Duff Gordon (b. 1821)	x	x	x			x		
7 Felicia Hemans (b. 1793)	x	x			x	x	x	x
8 Anna Jameson (b. 1794)	x				x			x
9 Fanny Kemble (b. 1809)	x	x	x			x		
10 Letitia E. Landon (b. 1802)	x				x			
11 Mary R. Mitford (b. 1787)	x				x	x		
12 Florence Nightingale (b. 1820)	x		x		x	x		
13 Mary Shelley (b. 1797)	x		x		x	x		x
14 Emily Shore (b. 1819)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x

KEY: Fr = French    Ge = German    Gr = Greek    He = Hebrew  
 It = Italian    La = Latin    Po = Portuguese    Sp = Spanish

Of the fourteen, eight had learned some Greek; but of that eight, only five (nos. 2, 4, 12, 13, 14) had any real knowledge of, and abiding interest in, Greek literature.

#### Sources of Information:

- 1 Janet Ross, Three Generations of Englishwomen, I.30.
- 2 Dorothy Hewlett, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 31.
- 3 The Journals of Claire Clairmont, ed. Marion Kingston Stocking, 45-46, 114, 152-55, 184-86, 187n<sup>63</sup>.
- 4 Memoir and Letters of Sara Coleridge, I.32.
- 5 Henrietta Litchfield, Emma Darwin: a Century of Family Letters, 1792-1896, I.62.
- 6 Janet Ross, Three Generations of Englishwomen, I.62, 68.
- 7 The Works of Mrs Hemans; with a Memoir of her Life, I.13, 27.
- 8 Gerardine MacPherson, Memoirs of the Life of Anna Jameson, 12.
- 9 Frances Ann Kemble, Record of a Girlhood, I.82-84, 99-100.
- 10 Laman Blanchard, Life and Literary Remains of L.E.L., I.77.
- 11 A.G. L'Estrange, The Life of Mary Russell Mitford, Related in a Selection from her Letters to her Friends, I.14-15, II.141.
- 12 Sir Edward Cook, The Life of Florence Nightingale, I.12.
- 13 Mary W. Shelley, Journal, ed. Frederick L. Jones, 15-17, 43-46, 97-98, 141-43.
- 14 Emily Shore, Journal, 259, 347.



education, and such scholars as Dr Parr did not display their education in mixed company,<sup>50</sup> probably because it would have been bad manners to do so. If we are to believe Peacock, even the learning of Italian was not actively encouraged, in case this should induce women to extend their linguistic pursuits into the male preserve. 'The friend of Tasso might aspire to the acquaintance of Virgil, or even to an introduction to Homer and Sophocles.'<sup>51</sup>

In the midst of all this prejudice it is heartening to find that the true philhellenes were anxious to promote a knowledge of the best of Greek literature among women. The Gentleman's Magazine suggested that if more women were to learn Greek, they would benefit not only themselves, but their menfolk also.<sup>52</sup> Mr Forester's earnest assurance that 'there are some, many, I hope, who can appreciate justly that most heavenly of earthly things, an enlightened female mind; whatever may be thought by the pedantry that envies, the foppery that fears. . . its loveliness',<sup>53</sup> is confirmed by the available evidence. Lucie Austin, afterwards Lady Duff Gordon, was sent to a small private school for boys in 1831 because her father was anxious to have her learn Greek.<sup>54</sup> In 1809 Thomas Campbell had three young ladies as his pupils, with whom 'he delighted to revise his Latin or Greek favourites, and point out their beauties'.<sup>55</sup> Both Emily Shore (who died of

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50 Redding, Fifty Years' Recollections, II.144.

51 Works of T.L. Peacock, II.168.

52 GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 611.

53 Works of T.L. Peacock, II.167.

54 Janet Ross, Three Generations of Englishwomen, I.68; II,175.

55 Beattie, II.188-89.



consumption at the age of nineteen)<sup>56</sup> and Florence Nightingale<sup>57</sup> were taught Greek by their fathers. Mr Shore and Mr Nightingale were both dissenters, and it seems that on the whole dissenters had more enlightened ideas about female education.<sup>58</sup> Sara Coleridge was largely self-taught, although she was given some assistance by Southey and her brother Derwent.<sup>59</sup> Mary Shelley and her half-sister Claire Clairmont were taught by Shelley.<sup>60</sup> Elizabeth Barrett Browning's early study of Greek, when she joined her brother Edward for lessons from his private tutor, can only have been undertaken with her father's approval.<sup>61</sup> Her later, more intensive study of Greek literature owed much to her friendship with Hugh Stuart Boyd, although the pleasure the blind scholar found in teaching her was qualified by his need for a companion to read to him the texts he was no longer able to read for himself, and he could occasionally be startled into a remark suggestive of latent prejudice. On Tuesday, 3 April 1832, Elizabeth Barrett wrote in her diary: 'I told him [Boyd] of my having now read every play of Euripides, & he seemed very much surprised, & called me "a funny girl", — & observed, that very few men had done as much.'<sup>62</sup>

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56 Emily Shore, Journal, 31-32.

57 Sir Edward Cook, The Life of Florence Nightingale, I.12.

58 See Cook, I.12; and Angus Easson, Elizabeth Gaskell, 20.

59 Memoir and Letters of Sara Coleridge; I.32; Minnow among Tritons, 82.

60 Mary W. Shelley, Journal, ed. Frederick L. Jones, 15; The Journals of Claire Clairmont, ed. Marion Kingston Stocking, 45-46.

61 Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.73-74.

62 Diary, 231. For her friendship with Boyd, and their study of Greek literature, see also Chapter 10 below.

As for the Greek authors women chose to read, Homer and the tragedians are the most frequently mentioned. These were 'the treasures of Grecian genius' with which Mr Forester would gladly make the inquiring woman acquainted.<sup>63</sup> Elizabeth Barrett began with Homer, then proceeded to Plato,<sup>64</sup> but did not read much drama until Boyd guided her in that direction. By the end of March 1832 she had read every single Greek tragedy, some several times, and always kept a special place in her affections for the drama.<sup>65</sup> Apart from Mary Shelley, not much is known about the Greek reading of the other women listed in Figure 2. Fanny Kemble learned only the Greek alphabet, and used it as a kind of schoolgirl code for her 'secrets'.<sup>66</sup> Her interest in Greek had a curious consequence later in life, when she apparently persuaded Edward Fitzgerald to complete and publish his translation of the Agamemnon.<sup>67</sup> Florence Nightingale's Greek reading is not recorded, but in later life she took a great interest in Jowett's translation of Plato, and at some stage in her life she herself translated portions of Phaedo, Crito and Apology.<sup>68</sup> Lady Duff Gordon published several translations from French and German, including a translation of Niebuhr's Stories of the Gods and Heroes of Greece,<sup>69</sup> but otherwise

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63 Works of T.L. Peacock, II.168.

64 Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning addressed to Richard Hengist Horne, ed. S.R. Townshend Mayer, I.159-61.

65 Diary, 229; Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.101.

66 Kemble, I.99.

67 Alfred McKinley Terhune, The Life of Edward Fitzgerald, 323.

68 Cook, I.13; II.225.

69 B.G. Niebuhr, Stories of the Gods and Heroes of Greece, edited by S. Austin (London, 1843). According to Ross, II.192, the translation was in fact by Lady Duff Gordon, the daughter of Sarah Austin.

seems not to have maintained an interest in Greek literature as such. Her mother also translated a book on Greek antiquities from German,<sup>70</sup> but since she knew no Greek, she had to rely on E. Hawtrey, Provost of Eton, for the translation of a few passages in that language.<sup>71</sup> Emily Shore's short life was divided between reading, teaching her younger brothers and sisters, and observing the flora and fauna around her home. She preferred Greek to Latin, finding it 'in every respect, a finer language, far more copious, fuller of those little niceties and distinctions which form the beauty of a language, yet less artificial, particularly in the order of words in a sentence, and fitter for more various styles and sorts of writing'.<sup>72</sup> Apart from Herodotus, who seems to have been her favourite author, the only other Greek book she specifically mentions is Euripides' Medea, which she was intending to read to keep up her Greek.<sup>73</sup>

After this inconclusive survey, it is a comfort to turn to the more informative journals of Mary Shelley and Claire Clairmont. Claire was the constant, and often irritatingly unwelcome, companion of the Shelleys, and shared their reading interests in her own impetuous and flighty manner. Mary and Claire began learning Greek at the same time in 1814, with Shelley as their teacher,<sup>74</sup> but Claire's enthusiasm seems to have dissipated fairly quickly. In the next four or five years Mary may have read a

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70 Heinrich Hase, The Politics and Private Life of the Ancient Greeks, translated from the German (London, 1836). See Ross, I.89.

71 Ross, I.89-90.

72 Shore, 119.

73 Shore, 125, 259.

74 See note 60 above.

little Greek, but was more accustomed to hearing Shelley read from his favourite authors, and probably shared his preference for the drama, of which he read a great deal in the years after 1814.

Claire was often present at these reading sessions, and her interest is reflected from time to time in her choice of reading matter. She read some Greek authors in translation including Potter's Aeschylus, and a few well-known books about ancient Greece including the English translation of Schlegel's Lectures on Dramatic Art.<sup>75</sup>

In 1819 Mary's interest in Greek apparently revived. In July, according to Shelley, she had 'now very seriously begun Greek', but was badly in need of a grammar book.<sup>76</sup> From 4 July she was reading Greek regularly, using mainly Homer at first,<sup>77</sup> and then graduating to tragedy as her facility in Greek improved. In 1820 she read Oedipus Tyrannus,<sup>78</sup> and in 1821 she added Antigone, Philoctetes and Oedipus Coloneus.<sup>79</sup> Her choice of Sophocles may reflect a personal preference, since Shelley's favourite dramatist was Aeschylus, or may simply suggest that Mary found Sophocles the easiest and most approachable of the three. In this context, it is worth noting that, prior to her friendship with Boyd, Elizabeth Barrett's reading of Greek tragedy had been almost all in Sophocles.<sup>80</sup>

Claire's journal for 1820 shows that she shared some of this

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75 Journals of C. Clairmont, 80-81, 101, 107, 110-11, 115-18, 159.

76 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.215.

77 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.215.

78 Mary W. Shelley, Journal, 144.

79 Mary W. Shelley, Journal, 150, 157; Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.276.

80 EBB/HSB, 6.

renewed interest in tragedy. An undated entry some time in August 1820 records a blank verse translation of the opening lines of Prometheus' first speech in the Prometheus, immediately above a transcription of the three Greek lines translated.<sup>81</sup> M.K. Stocking, in a footnote to the translation, suggests that it may be Shelley's, but in fact Claire was copying Potter's translation of these lines.<sup>82</sup> Claire's acquaintance with Potter's Aeschylus is an interesting and apparently hitherto unnoticed fact. One wonders whether this translation belonged to Shelley, and if so, how frequently he used it. When he read the Agamemnon with Lady Mountcashel in April 1820, does this prove that she knew Greek, or that they were reading Potter?<sup>83</sup>

On 8 December 1820 Claire noted the translation of a line from the Oedipus Tyrannus ("It is time to nourish my feet with flight stronger than tempest footed horses"),<sup>84</sup> perhaps having heard Shelley or Mary translate the line, and having for some reason found it memorable. Since she has substituted 'my' for 'his' in translating the word μῦ, she may have begun to realise that she was overstaying her welcome in the Shelley household. Two weeks later, on 20 December, she entered another line translated from the Prometheus.<sup>85</sup> Claire translates freely, offering two alternatives for the indefinite δῆτις as subject of κρατῆ: 'A tyrant or master newly ruling is ever rough says Eschylus'. If,

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81 PV. 88-90; Journals of C. Clairmont, 161-62.

82 See The Tragedies of Aeschylus, translated by R. Potter (new edition, Oxford, 1808), 8-9.

83 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.186.

84 OT. 465-66; Journals of C. Clairmont, 192.

85 PV. 35; Journals of C. Clairmont, 198.

as Stocking suggests, Claire had been listening to Shelley translating, it would be typical of him to emphasise the implication of domination in the verb κρατῆ. Claire does not seem to have kept up her interest in Greek literature after leaving the Shelleys. Mary's last record of her Greek reading was on 30 March 1823, when she noted that she had finished part of the Odyssey.<sup>86</sup>

It cannot be denied that the women who continued their study of Greek outside the schoolroom were the intellectual elite of their sex. Unlike boys, girls were fortunate in not having Latin and Greek crammed down their resisting gullets, and the less talented girls were quite content to acquire a nodding acquaintance with French and, perhaps, Italian. The few who learned the classics, and Greek in particular, did so out of a genuine desire to learn, and those who persevered were well rewarded by the pleasure they found in reading the best of Greek literature. A desire to learn can in its turn promote a desire to teach, and there is an attractive description of Emily Shore, herself only in her teens, with her ringlets falling around her face, teaching the younger children the intricacies of Greek conditional sentences, in tones of genuine pleasure.<sup>87</sup> Sara Coleridge, too, was anxious for her female friends to know something of the Greek she enjoyed so much,<sup>88</sup> although she may not have won many converts. (It is a pity E.L. Griggs has so little to say about Sara Coleridge's scholarship in his biography of her, which makes only one brief and unrepresentative reference to the subject: namely, that she

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86 Mary W. Shelley, Journal, 189.

87 Shore, 128n.

88 Memoir and Letters of Sara Coleridge, I.169.



was translating the Agamemnon in 1848.)<sup>89</sup> Women like Letitia Landon and Felicia Hemans were probably typical in their preference for modern languages, although Mrs Hemans for one was interested in classical antiquity, from which she occasionally drew ideas for her poems.<sup>90</sup>

Many women, whether unable or unwilling to learn Greek, nevertheless felt that even indirect contact with the classics was worth while. Some attended lectures, not merely because it was the fashionable thing to do, but out of genuine interest. Thomas Campbell, whose lectures on classical literature were popular in their day, was impressed by the erudition of the ladies of Liverpool who came to hear him speak, but was less struck by the ladies of Birmingham, who were apparently not so knowledgeable, although at least able to laugh in the right places when he read passages (in translation) from the Greek and Latin comic poets.<sup>91</sup> Others could read the classics in translation. For tragedy, the old standby still seems to have been Potter, whose translations were all regularly reprinted,<sup>92</sup> and well enough known for Mrs Hemans to include a parody of Potter's Aeschylus in a series of imitations of earlier English poets which she wrote in or around 1820.<sup>93</sup> It was Potter's Aeschylus, too, to which Mary Russell Mitford turned when she became interested in Greek tragedy.<sup>94</sup> She

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89 Earl Leslie Griggs, Coleridge Fille: a Biography of Sara Coleridge, 196. When writing of her education (p. 31), Griggs says nothing of her learning Greek.

90 The Works of Mrs Hemans; with a Memoir of her Life, by her Sister, I.27.

91 Beattie, II.343, 347.

92 See Appendix 1, Section A.

93 Works of Mrs Hemans, I.44.

94 L'Estrange, II.138. See also Chapter 6 below.

was well aware, though, of the deficiencies of translations, especially the English translations of Sophocles, which she found 'abominable'.<sup>95</sup> Her opinions of the translations which subsequently appeared are unfortunately not recorded, except for an ambiguous reference to Elizabeth Barrett's Prometheus Bound as being done 'in a manner that has the admiration of scholars',<sup>96</sup> which hardly tells us what Miss Mitford thought of it.

As for writing and publishing translations, few women ventured to damn themselves as 'bluestockings' by translating from the classics, especially from Greek. Apart from Elizabeth Barrett Browning I know of only two other women whose translations from Greek poetry were published between 1800 and 1840. In 1809 a certain Miss Anna Jane Vardil, later Mrs Niven, published a small volume of poetry including translations from the minor Greek poets which she claimed to have written between the ages of ten and sixteen.<sup>97</sup> This was so well received by the critics that it went into no fewer than three editions within one year.<sup>98</sup> Also in 1809 a Mrs Ware published a similar volume of poems and translations,<sup>99</sup> which was kindly received by the British Critic,<sup>100</sup> but otherwise

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95 L'Estrange, II.140-41.

96 Letters of M.R. Mitford, ed. H. Chorley, I.270.

97 Poems and Translations from the Minor Greek Poets, and Others; Written Chiefly between the Ages of Ten and Sixteen. By a Lady (London, 1809). I have not seen this book, and have drawn the biographical information from the catalogues of the British Library and National Union of Congress.

98 See especially BC, xxxiii (1809), 517-19; EM, lv (1809), 140-42; MR, lxii (1810), 284-87.

99 Poems, Consisting of Translations from the Greek, Latin, and Italian, with some Originals, by Mrs [Mary] Ware, of Warehill, Herts (London, 1809). I have not seen this book.

100 BC, xxxiv (1809), 296-98. According to this review (p. 297), Mrs Ware was largely self-taught.

went unnoticed.

In the early nineteenth century, therefore, it was accepted by the majority of people that an acquaintance with classical literature was essential for anyone who wished to be really well educated. For all of those — and there were many — who had not learned Greek at school, there was the hard choice of teaching themselves the language (adopted by only a handful of talented and determined spirits), or the easy option of reading translations. Naturally, those who taught themselves Greek often amused themselves by making translations, and some of these translations found their way into print.

## CHAPTER 4. FROM SCULPTURE TO TRAGEDY

It is by no means always that a change in literary feeling is due to an impulse exclusively literary. Far more often, probably, the impulse starts in a region with which literature may seem to have nothing to do.

E.E. Kellett, The Whirligig of Taste, 10.

In the mid-eighteenth century interest in ancient Greece was slowly beginning to grow, and although at first this interest was mainly directed at archaeology and the fine arts, towards the end of the century Greek literature, especially Greek poetry, was attracting attention, and the way then lay open for translations. This movement began in 1757 with the publication of the first volume of Le Antichità di Ercolano and continued with the publication in the 1760s of the archaeological discoveries at Pompeii and Paestum.<sup>1</sup> Interest was further excited by the publication in 1762 of the first volume of Antiquities of Athens,<sup>2</sup> edited by James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, whose journey to Greece

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1 B. Sprague Allen, Tides in English Taste (1619-1800): a Background for the Study of Literature, II.232-35; Buxton, 4-5; Stern, 11. Buxton and Stern give conflicting dates for the publication of the discoveries at Herculaneum. According to Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft, Vol. VIII, Part 1, column 548, the Reale Accademia Ercolanese was founded in 1755, and the first volume of Le Antichità di Ercolano was published in 1757.

2 James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, The Antiquities of Athens, 4 vols. (London, 1762-1816). Stern, 24n<sup>18</sup>, gives a full bibliography of all volumes, including the supplementary volume published in 1830 and all reprints.

had been financed by the Society of Dilettanti<sup>3</sup> with the express purpose of improving the taste of their fellow Englishmen. This publication in England more or less coincided with the publication in Germany of Winckelmann's seminal Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums (1764), which was concerned mainly with the study of Greco-Roman sculpture, the only classical sculpture then known in Western Europe. Winckelmann's work was quickly followed by Lessing's Laokoon, oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie (1766), applying Winckelmann's principles of sculptural aesthetic to the interpretation of drama, and Herder's Sylvae Criticae (1769), an answer to Laokoon, which applied the principles of sculpture to poetry.<sup>4</sup>

The year 1766 also saw the publication of Fuseli's English translation of Winckelmann's earlier pamphlet Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Wercke in der Mahlerey und Bilderhauerkunst (1754),<sup>5</sup> in which he had criticised baroque art and stressed the superiority of the Greeks as artistic models. Buxton has pointed out Winckelmann's debt in this pamphlet to Shaftesbury's Characteristicks, since Winckelmann wrote it before he had even seen any original works of Greco-Roman sculpture, and followed Shaftesbury in his reliance on Greek literature for the formulation of his aesthetic principles.<sup>6</sup>

Winckelmann's ideas spread slowly in England, and it was to

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3 Buxton, 6; Stern, 20-25.

4 Buxton, 7; Stern, 82-84.

5 Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks: With Instructions for the Connoisseur, and an Essay on Greece in Works of Art. Translated from the German Original of the Abbé Winckelmann, by Henry Fusseli, A.M. (London, 1765). See Buxton, 13; Stern, 88-92.

6 Buxton, 8-9.

take another twenty years for them to reach a really wide audience, first of all in the very popular Essays of Vicesimus Knox,<sup>7</sup> and soon afterwards in Gillies's History of Ancient Greece,<sup>8</sup> another popular book which became a schoolroom favourite. Through such works, the idea that there was a connection, in aesthetic terms, between art and literature was fairly well established in the cultured late-eighteenth-century mind, although its origin in the work of the German critics was not necessarily well-known. For example, even as late as 1815 we find that although Wordsworth had heard of Winckelmann, he had read only the English translation of Winckelmann's Gedanken, which he thought too 'slight' and 'superficial' to be a satisfactory reason for Winckelmann's critical reputation.<sup>9</sup>

The Greco-Roman sculptures had already been familiar in the Renaissance, but a new artistic genre of classical antiquity was now being discovered as a result of the archaeological work in southern Italy. This new genre was Greek vase-painting, which became known to the British public through the two collections of Greek vases formed by Sir William Hamilton, who was sent to Naples as British envoy in 1764 and remained there until 1800. The first of these collections was bought by the British Museum in 1772; the second was partially lost in a shipwreck off the Isles of Scilly,

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- 7 Essays Moral and Literary, by Vicesimus Knox, M.A. A New Edition in Two Volumes (London, 1782). This book proved to be so popular that it was in its seventeenth edition by 1817. Stern, 95-96, summarises Knox's relevant remarks.
- 8 History of Ancient Greece, Its Colonies and Conquests, to the Division of the Macedonian Empire; Including the History of Literature, Philosophy, and the Fine Arts, by John Gillies, LL.D, F.A.S., 2 vols. (London, 1786). See Stern, 97-100.
- 9 The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: the Middle Years, ed. Ernest de Selincourt; second edition revised by Mary Moorman and Alan G. Hill, II.258.



although some of the vases were rescued and eventually reached the British Museum.<sup>10</sup> Hamilton also published his collections in 1766-67<sup>11</sup> and 1791-95.<sup>12</sup> In 1769, soon after the publication of the first collection, Josiah Wedgwood used one of the figure-groups from the engraved drawings as the basis for the design on some of the first pottery produced at his new factory at Etruria in Staffordshire.<sup>13</sup> The popularity of Wedgwood's wares and his continuing adaptation of the designs in Hamilton's collection further increased public interest in Grecian art.

At the same time, improved scholarship and an increase in the publication of translations enabled the English public to learn a little more about Greek literature. In the latter half of the eighteenth century several Greek authors appeared for the first time in English translation, including the complete works of the three tragedians.<sup>14</sup> Francklin's translation of Sophocles was first published in 1759 and three times reprinted before the end of the century.<sup>15</sup> Its popularity ensured that Potter's rather indifferent translation, published in 1788, achieved only slow sales.<sup>16</sup> Potter had been more successful with his Aeschylus, which first appeared in 1777 to a warm critical reception,<sup>17</sup> and was reprinted

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10 Buxton, 11-12.

11 Collection of Etruscan, Greek, and Roman Antiquities, from the Cabinet of the Hon. W. Hamilton (1766).

12 Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases...discovered in Sepulchres in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies...now in the Possession of Sir Wm. Hamilton... (Naples, 1791-95).

13 Buxton, 13.

14 Buxton, 5-6.

15 See Appendix 1, Section A. Foster's entry for Franklin's translations (p. 108) omits the 1793 edition.

16 Veilleux, 90.

17 Veilleux, 77-80.

two years later. His translation of Euripides, published 1781-83, was apparently regarded as better than his Sophocles,<sup>18</sup> but was not reprinted in the eighteenth century, no doubt partly because of the competition from Wodhull's translation (published 1782), although the quality of Wodhull's work seems to have been as unsatisfactory as Potter's.<sup>19</sup> In the years 1800-1840 Potter's and Francklin's translations were almost constantly in print, while Wodhull's Euripides was reprinted only once.<sup>20</sup> Coleridge's sneer that translations of tragedy, when he was a boy, found a place only in the libraries of those who neither wanted nor read them is surely an exaggeration, although not without foundation.<sup>21</sup> Anna Seward's opinion was probably typical of the late eighteenth century. She turned up her nose at Greek tragedy, which she had read in translation, and which she found 'pompous', with 'unnatural botching choruses' inferior to Otway, Rowe and others.<sup>22</sup> Before 1800 Greek tragedy was little known, little understood and rarely translated,<sup>23</sup> but the tide was slowly beginning to turn.

Reference was made in Chapter 1 to Foster's tabular analysis of translations from Greek literature in the years 1751-1800 and 1801-1850, and its demonstration of the sudden great leap in the number of translations of Greek tragedy after 1800. When it is remembered that Greek art and literature had been attracting

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18 Veilleux, 82-85, 91.

19 Veilleux, 87-89.

20 See Appendix 1, Section A.

21 CSC, II.82.

22 Cary, I.237.

23 See Parry, 1-34.

attention for over fifty years already, and that public taste can be fickle, some explanation must be found for this sudden increase in interest. Another of Foster's tables shows that in the latter part of the eighteenth century interest in translation peaked in 1780 before falling away in 1790-1800 to a lower level than that of 1750-1760, and then rising rapidly in the first decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> Foster explains the peak in 1780 as coinciding with the publication of Johnson's Lives of the English Poets, which included translations,<sup>25</sup> but the sudden increase after 1800 cannot be so simply explained.

Obviously, the beginning of a new century does not mean an instant change of direction in public taste. Interest in the remains of classical antiquity continued, as did scholarly industry, and Wedgwood's factory was still turning out Grecian pottery, and earning the admiration of Coleridge for its 'transfusion of the fairest forms of Greece and Rome into the articles of hourly domestic use'.<sup>26</sup> But a number of new factors ensured that public interest in Greece did not die, and in many ways actively turned attention towards Greek drama.

First of all, travel to Greece became commoner, instead of being limited to a few intrepid antiquarians like Stuart and Revett who were prepared to brave dangers and endure discomforts; for young men were now much more likely to include the Eastern Mediterranean in their Grand Tour. In fact, according to John Cam Hobhouse, who had visited Greece in 1809-1810 in the company of

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24 Foster, xii.

25 Foster, xv

26 Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II.220; quoted by Larrabee, 139.

Lord Byron, the difficulties of travelling to Greece had been grossly exaggerated, and the truth was now rapidly becoming obvious — so much so, he says, that 'Attica at present swarms with travellers, and several of our fair countrywomen have ascended the rocks of the Acropolis'.<sup>27</sup> More than this, an enterprising Greek was planning to open a tavern, 'a novelty surely never before witnessed at Athens', in order to cater for this flood of visitors.<sup>28</sup> There was even a Greek house at Mistra called 'The English Inn' where roast beef and port were on the menu.<sup>29</sup>

The new visitors, in contrast to earlier travellers, now not only wanted to see ruined temples and antique inscriptions, but also took a keen interest in local society and customs and enjoyed the rugged scenery.<sup>30</sup> Many kept diaries of their travels and published them in whole or in part on their return home. Their books ranged from such learned works as Gell's writings on topography<sup>31</sup> to the more generally popular travelogues of Hobhouse, Clarke,<sup>32</sup> Dodwell<sup>33</sup> and Hughes,<sup>34</sup> and there were so many of them,

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27 John Cam Hobhouse, A Journey through Albania, and other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia, to Constantinople, during the Years 1809 and 1810, I.301-02.

28 Hobhouse, I.302.

29 Spencer, 230.

30 Clarke, Greek Studies, 199.

31 Sir William Gell, The Itinerary of Greece, with a Commentary on Pausanias and Strabo, and an Account of the Monuments of Antiquity at Present Existing in that Country (London, 1810). A second edition was published in 1827.

32 Edward Daniel Clarke, Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa, 8 vols., 4th edition (London, 1816-18). The first edition had appeared in 1810.

33 Edward Dodwell, A Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece, during the Years 1801, 1805, 1806, 2 vols. (London, 1819).

34 Thomas Smart Hughes, Travels in Sicily, Greece and Albania, 2 vols. (London, 1820). A second edition was published in 1830.

particularly in the second decade, that their number eventually provoked a writer in the Monthly Review to complain in 1821 that 'we have been supplied almost to satiety with travels through the countries traversed by Mr. Hughes'.<sup>35</sup>

Actual visits to Greece seem to have decreased rather rapidly after 1820. Clarke claims that it was because of a loss of interest in Greek antiquities,<sup>36</sup> but this is only half the truth. Second editions of the travel-books by Gell (1827) and Hughes (1830), and such new books as W.M. Leake's Travels in the Morea (1830) and Travels in Northern Greece (1835), suggest that interest was not entirely dead. A second edition of The Antiquities of Athens was published in four volumes in 1825-30, with a third edition appearing in 1837. Clarke, for some unaccountable reason, seems to have forgotten that the outbreak of open rebellion among the Greeks against their Turkish masters in 1821, which led to freedom for Greece in 1827, would have made travel in the Eastern Mediterranean rather unattractive for quite some time.

What is more to the point, the Greek revolution itself served to promote interest in Greece. Admittedly, this was primarily an interest in contemporary Greece, and in a people struggling to regain their liberty; but a close second to this was a desire to see Greece rise towards something of its former greatness, and no educated Englishman could think of the Greek insurgents without remembering the heroism of Themistocles and Leonidas. Lempriere's

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35 MR, xcv (1821), 113. See also Clarke, Greek Studies, 191-206 for more information about travellers to Greece.

36 Clarke, Greek Studies, 206.



feelings were typical:

I feel for the descendants of these immortal heroes who bled in the field of Marathon and of Thermopylae, in the defence of their liberties; and though the land which gave them birth has almost lost its name and its consequence under the iron yoke of Turkish despotism, yet the bravery of their leaders and the matchless exertions of their citizens in arms, in arts, and in literature, live and must ever live, in the page of Classical History. I have, in common with thousands of my fellow-countrymen, derived the greatest gratification and the sweetest delight, in the perusal of those immortal writings which dignify the human character, which elevate us above ourselves, and which place the acquirements of past ages almost above the competition of modern times.<sup>37</sup>

Not only did people hope that a liberated Greece would again be a great nursery of the arts, but they also turned to the writings of classical Greece to remind themselves of what once had been. Nor is it surprising that there should be a particular interest in Greek drama when one recalls the oft-repeated 'fact' that Aeschylus fought at Marathon, that Sophocles performed in the chorus at the thanksgiving ceremony following the Athenian victory at Salamis, and that Euripides was born on the very day of this great sea-battle.<sup>38</sup>

At first, English sympathy for the Greek cause led to the raising of subscriptions and the sending of assistance to the insurgents,<sup>39</sup> but after 1825 active interest began to decrease, apparently because some of the money raised had been mismanaged, and also because of internal discord within the Greek revolutionary movement itself.<sup>40</sup> From 1827 it was left to the British government

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37 GM, xcii (1822), 604, quoted by Penn, 367.

38 See, for example, the entries under 'Aeschylus', 'Euripides' and 'Sophocles' in that most popular reference book, Lempriere's Classical Dictionary, seventh edition (1809).

39 Penn, 369-71.

40 Penn, 654-60.



to support and encourage the embryonic new Greece. Virginia Penn gives the impression that 1827 saw the end of public interest in Greece,<sup>41</sup> but this is not true, as a glance into the popular periodicals of the time will show. There was, for example, an article on 'The Greek Question' in the Quarterly Review in 1830,<sup>42</sup> to which a writer in Fraser's Magazine replied soon afterwards.<sup>43</sup> And there were poems, such as the 'Lines written on leaving England, to embark for Greece', published in the Athenaeum in 1828,<sup>44</sup> and 'Greece to the Holy Alliance; written previously to the Siege of Missolonghi' in the Monthly Magazine in 1834.<sup>45</sup> This poetry lies buried in contemporary magazines because its feeble quality is unworthy of resurrection, but it would never even have been published if the magazine editors had thought there was no public interest in its subject-matter.

Obviously, travelogues and contemporary events could do no more than create a general interest in Greece, whether ancient or modern, but against this general background it is possible to set events which directed public attention more precisely. The most important of these was the arrival in England of the Elgin Marbles, itself one of the results of travel to Greece, and of the antiquarian interests of the late eighteenth century. The best account of the work of Lord Elgin, and the history of the Marbles from the time of their removal from the Acropolis to their eventual installation in the British Museum, can be found in A.H. Smith's

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41 Penn, 654-60.

42 QR, xliii (1830), 495-553.

43 'The Greek Question and Quarterly Review', FM, ii (1830), 484-86.

44 Ath, i (1828), 255.

45 MM, n.s., xvii (1834), 29.

long article 'Lord Elgin and his Collection',<sup>46</sup> and the story is too well known for more than a summary to be needed here.

Lord Elgin had been appointed ambassador to Constantinople in 1799, and in 1801 obtained permission to take moulds of the friezes and sculptures on the Parthenon, and to remove any pieces of sculpture and inscribed stones he wanted from the Acropolis. The packing-cases containing Elgin's collection began to reach England in 1802 after a hazardous sea-journey from Greece, and held many miscellaneous fragments of statuary and carved building stones as well as the pediments, metopes and frieze from the Parthenon.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, Elgin was returning overland to Britain, and had the misfortune to be arrested in Paris in May 1803, and to be detained as a prisoner of war for the next three years.<sup>48</sup> During that time the packing-cases lay unopened, so that it was not until 1807 that the Marbles were put on public display, albeit rather obscurely, in a room at the back of Elgin's house in Park Lane.<sup>49</sup> In 1811 negotiations were begun for the sale of the collection to the nation, but were soon suspended because Elgin was offered only half of the £60,000 he demanded.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, the Marbles were removed to Burlington House in 1812, where they continued to attract visitors.<sup>51</sup> In 1816, as a result of the report from the Select Committee which had been set up to determine whether, and

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46 A.H. Smith, 'Lord Elgin and his Collection', *JHS*, xxxvi (1916), 163-372. See also Courtenay Pollock, 'Lord Elgin and the Marbles', Essays by Divers Hands, Being the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature in the United Kingdom, new series, xi (1932), 41-67.

47 A.H. Smith, 164-294.

48 Clarke, Greek Studies, 193-94.

49 A.H. Smith, 300.

50 A.H. Smith, 307-12.

51 A.H. Smith, 313-16.

at what price, the Marbles should be bought with public money, the collection was bought for £35,000 and put on public display in the British Museum in 1817.<sup>52</sup> At about this time, Lord Elgin was asked by J. Woods, who was preparing the fourth volume of The Antiquities of Athens, if he would give permission for the collation of the old drawings of the Parthenon frieze, which had been made on the Acropolis, with the original sculptures now that they were in London. Owing to a misunderstanding, this permission was not given, and the volume was published in 1816 with the old drawings.<sup>53</sup>

Such protracted proceedings ensured that the public were constantly reminded of the existence in London of something new, controversial and apparently worthy of their attention. Naturally, first opinions were rather mixed, ranging from those of B.R. Haydon ('I foretold that they would prove themselves the finest things on earth')<sup>54</sup> and Nollekens ('the finest things that ever came into this country')<sup>55</sup> to those of the architect Wilkins ('very middling')<sup>56</sup> and Payne Knight ('I think of things extant I should put them in the second rank — some of them').<sup>57</sup> Keats was taken to see the Marbles by Haydon at the beginning of March 1817,<sup>58</sup> and was immensely impressed by what he saw: 'He went again and again to see the Elgin Marbles, and would sit for an hour or more at a time

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52 A.H. Smith, 342-45, 351.

53 A.H. Smith, 317.

54 A.H. Smith, 301.

55 A.H. Smith, 337.

56 Pollock, 59.

57 A.H. Smith, 338.

58 Larrabee, 210-14.

beside them rapt in revery.'<sup>59</sup> The influence of the Elgin Marbles can be traced in Keats's subsequent poetry, particularly in the giant statuesque figures of 'The Fall of Hyperion'.<sup>60</sup> Hazlitt was also impressed, saying that he had never liked any statues until he saw the Elgin Marbles.<sup>61</sup> But Keats, Haydon and Hazlitt were in the minority, although their opinions were eventually accepted as the more just assessment.<sup>62</sup>

Byron persisted in a preference for the more familiar and elegant forms of Greco-Roman statuary.<sup>63</sup> In a letter to the traveller E.D. Clarke, Byron confessed that he had 'little of the antique spirit, except a wish to immolate Id. Elgin to Minerva & Nemesis'.<sup>64</sup> which he duly did in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, II. xi-xv, and 'The Curse of Minerva'. Coleridge also apparently preferred the Greco-Roman statues, putting the Venus de Medici and the Apollo Belvedere among 'the noblest productions of human genius'.<sup>65</sup> As for Wordsworth, he seems to have had little more than a fashionable interest in the Marbles; his remark to Haydon that 'a Man must be senseless as a clod, or perverse as a Fiend, not to be enraptured with them',<sup>66</sup> reads like the kind of

59 William Sharp, The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn (1892), 32; quoted by Larrabee, 212n<sup>16</sup>.

60 Larrabee, 214-32, discusses Keats and sculpture, showing that nonclassical sculpture also influenced Keats, but to a lesser extent.

61 Frederick E. Pierce, Currents and Eddies in the English Romantic Generation, 176.

62 See Larrabee, 151; Pollock, 44.

63 Larrabee, 149-67; see especially p. 155.

64 Byron's Letters and Journals, II.156-57.

65 Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II.226-27. See also Larrabee, 134-48.

66 Letters of Wordsworth: Middle Years, II.257-58.

platitudinous remark made to an enthusiast merely to keep him happy. According to Larrabee, Wordsworth was interested in the Antique 'more on the printed page than in the gallery and more in theory than in actual representational examples'.<sup>67</sup>

H.C. Robinson also thought little of them, coolly describing the half-unpacked exhibits at Burlington House in 1812 as 'interesting',<sup>68</sup> and admitting again in 1817 that they did nothing for him.<sup>69</sup> When Thomas Doubleday looked for a sculptural simile to illustrate his remarks on translation in Blackwood's Magazine in 1823, he turned to the Farnese Hercules and the Apollo Belvedere, secure in the knowledge that his readers would be more familiar with them than with the figures from the Parthenon.<sup>70</sup> The Elgin Marbles, in fact, seem to have been something of a nine days' wonder, to be seen and talked about, but not necessarily appreciated or understood. In purely 'popular' terms, the influence of the Marbles can perhaps be most truly seen in the remarkable advertisement in The Times, 8 January 1814, addressed 'To the Nobility, Gentry and the Fashionable World', which offered the following:

Ross's newly invented Grecian Volute Head-Dress, formed from the true marble models, brought into this country from the Acropolis of Athens by Lord Elgin. . . The elegance of taste, and simplicity of nature which it displays, together with the facility of dressing, have caused its universal admiration and adoption.<sup>71</sup>

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67 Larrabee, 131; and see further pp. 120-34.

68 Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, selected and edited by Thomas Sadler, I.394-95.

69 Diary of H.C. Robinson, II.51-52.

70 Bl, xiii (1823), 544. Compare GM, xci<sup>2</sup> (1821), 337: 'But who can say he will improve the Belvidere Apollo, or Virgil?'

71 Quoted by A.H. Smith, 317; Pollock, 63; Clarke, Greek Studies, 195n.



Any modish women who chose to go about looking like Caryatids or Ionic capitals tell us more about the folly of human nature than Regency appreciation of classical sculpture.

In any event, the familiar Greco-Roman statues were also claiming their share of public attention, for Elgin's 'theft' of the remains on the Acropolis was paralleled by Napoleon's removal of the Apollo Belvedere, the Venus de Medici, the Laocoön, the Torso Belvedere and the Horses of Lysippus to France. They were eventually returned in 1815 after Napoleon's final defeat, but in the years between the Peace of Amiens in 1802 and the resumption of hostilities, many Englishmen made the short trip to Paris to see them. Flaxman seems to have been the only prominent person who refused to look at Napoleon's loot, although Landor's enjoyment of the statues was ruined by his rage at Napoleon's presumption.<sup>72</sup> Campbell, who can be taken as a fairly exact reflector of contemporary taste, visited the Louvre in 1814 and wrote in awe after viewing the Apollo Belvedere, 'All pedantic knowledge of statuary falls away, when the most ignorant in the arts finds a divine presence in this great created form.'<sup>73</sup> H.C. Robinson, equally 'ignorant in the arts', also visited the Louvre in 1814, but his diary shows that he was more interested in meeting Mrs Siddons in one of the galleries than in looking at statues.<sup>74</sup> The return of these treasures to Italy in 1815 prompted a number of poems such as 'The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy' (1816) by Mrs Hemans, another 'dependable barometer of taste',<sup>75</sup> and 'The

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72 Larrabee, 257-59.

73 Beattie, II.256. See also Larrabee, 258-59.

74 Diary of H.C. Robinson, I.438-54.

75 The phrase is Larrabee's, p. 259.



Horses of Lysippus' in the Gentleman's Magazine,<sup>76</sup> which also published poems on the Elgin Marbles.<sup>77</sup>

It is obviously wrong to think that the arrival of the Elgin Marbles brought about an immediate and complete realignment of public taste. Rather, it is the continuing general interest in Greek sculpture regardless of period that is most significant, for by this time the age-old Horatian principle 'ut pictura poesis' had been reinvigorated by the criticism of Herder and his successors, so that people were quite prepared to see sculpture and poetry as sister-arts, even though they may have been ignorant of the provenance of such aesthetic principles. Larrabee has detailed the influence, both direct and indirect, of Greek sculpture on the poetry of the Romantic period, showing in particular that the Romantic poets wanted to express the 'feelings' underlying the surface of sculpture.<sup>78</sup> Larrabee does not include Peacock in his survey, and it is therefore worth recording here that according to Edith Nicolls, Peacock combined his studies of classical literature with the study of Greek statuary.<sup>79</sup> His volume of poems, Palmyra, was inspired by Wood's folio The Ruins of Palmyra, and the statuesque qualities of Rhododaphne have a similarly non-literary origin.<sup>80</sup>

Another important example of the sculpture-poetry relationship is the work which made Flaxman famous. Flaxman had set out to make

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76 GM, lxxxviii<sup>1</sup> (1818), 66-67.

77 'The Elgin Marbles', GM, lxxxviii<sup>1</sup> (1818), 65; 'On the Statue of Theseus in the Elgin Collection of Marbles', GM, lxxxviii<sup>2</sup> (1818), 157.

78 See especially, Larrabee, 141.

79 Works of T.L. Peacock, I.xxvi.

80 Works of T.L. Peacock, I.xxxiii-xxxiv, lxxix.

his name as a sculptor, and had also worked as a designer for Wedgwood from about 1775,<sup>81</sup> but his greatest success came from the series of drawings he made to illustrate the poems of Homer. These were done on commission for Mrs Hare-Naylor, and comprised thirty-nine illustrations for the Iliad and thirty-four for the Odyssey. First published in Rome in 1793, they were published in London in 1795, the engravings for the English edition being done by Blake. A second English edition appeared in 1805.<sup>82</sup> The success of this work brought him a second commission, this time from the Dowager Countess Spencer, for a series of illustrations for the tragedies of Aeschylus. The thirty-one engraved drawings were published in London in the same year as the illustrations for Homer,<sup>83</sup> but a second English edition did not appear until 1831, suggesting that the Aeschylus drawings were less popular, perhaps because the epic heroes were more familiar than the mythological figures of Aeschylean drama to an audience nourished on Pope's Homer. Apart from publication as a separate work, Flaxman's drawings were also used to illustrate editions and translations of the poets concerned — for example, the edition of Porson's Aeschylus published in Glasgow in 1795,<sup>84</sup> Harford's translation of the Agamemnon and the edition of Potter's Aeschylus published by Murray in 1831.<sup>85</sup> Flaxman continued to work this profitable vein by creating similar illustrations for Dante (1807) and Hesiod (1817),<sup>86</sup> and by planning

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81 W.G. Constable, John Flaxman, 1755-1826, 4-12.

82 Constable, John Flaxman, 45.

83 Constable, John Flaxman, 46.

84 Ἀι τοῦ Αἰσχύλου τραγωδίαί ἐπτά, ed. R. Porson, illustrated by J. Flaxman (Glasgow, 1795). An edition without illustrations was also published.

85 Both are included in Appendix 1.

86 Constable, John Flaxman, 48-49.

illustrations for various poetical works including Sophocles, for which eight drawings had been finished before Flaxman's death in 1826.<sup>87</sup>

Even more significant than Flaxman's artwork in shaping public taste and helping to direct it towards Greek poetry were the lectures of August Wilhelm Schlegel, not only in their own right, but also in their influence on the lectures of Coleridge and Campbell. Although in some ways A.W. Schlegel merely repeated and extended the work of his brother Friedrich, what he had to say about Greek drama was entirely his own.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, Englishmen came to think of him as "our national critic", "the new Stagyrte", the one clear voice out of Germany'.<sup>89</sup> The main reason for his popularity in England, of course, was his enthusiasm for Shakespeare, but those who read his lectures would also have found much to interest them in his remarks on Greek drama.

Schlegel's Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur were first delivered in the spring of 1808 before a discerning and highly enthusiastic audience in Vienna, and then published in Heidelberg in 1809-11.<sup>90</sup> In the lectures, Schlegel made a wide survey of the development of drama from its Greek origins up to the time of Schiller and Goethe, with Lectures II-V being devoted to Greek tragedy. The English translation by John Black<sup>91</sup> was

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87 Constable, John Flaxman, 51.

88 René Wellek, A History of Modern Criticism, 1750-1950: Vol. II, The Romantic Age, 5-73, compares the critical work of the two brothers.

89 Wellek, 36.

90 Karl Breul (ed.), The Romantic Movement in German Literature: Illustrative Texts — Prose & Verse, 411.

91 A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature, by Augustus William Schlegel, translated from the original German by John Black. Referred to hereafter as Lectures.

published in 1815 at a time when the British were just beginning to take a serious interest in German literature and criticism, mainly as a result of Mme de Staël's book de l'Allemagne, published in French and English editions in 1813.<sup>92</sup> (Strangely enough, it was an Englishman who could claim some of the credit for this series of events: H.C. Robinson had advised Mme de Staël some years previously to make the acquaintance of Schlegel; she did so, and years later she said she could never have written de l'Allemagne without Schlegel's assistance.)<sup>93</sup> The English translation of Schlegel's Lectures was generally well received by the critics. In the Monthly Review, William Taylor praised a work that deserved 'to be considered as forming an epoch in the history of criticism';<sup>94</sup> while Hazlitt, writing in the Edinburgh Review, quoted long extracts and commended Schlegel's critical opinions as 'in general ingenious and just', although he found fault with the obscurity of Schlegel's definitions of 'classical' and 'romantic'.<sup>95</sup> A review of the French edition had already appeared in the Quarterly Review.<sup>96</sup>

In the first lecture, Schlegel formulated his general principle 'that the spirit of ancient art and poetry is plastic, and that of the moderns is picturesque'.<sup>97</sup> As Taylor pointed out

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92 See V. Stockley, German Literature as Known in England, 1750-1830, 10-13; Walter F. Schirmer, Der Einfluss der deutschen Literatur auf die Englische im 19. Jahrhundert, 38-43.

93 Diary of H.C. Robinson, I.182-83.

94 MR, lxxxix (1816), 113-128 (p. 128).

95 ER, xxvi (1816), 66-107.

96 QR, xii (1814), 112-46, reviewing Cours de Littérature Dramatique, par A.W. Schlegel, traduit d'Allemand, 3 vols. (Paris & Geneva, 1814). The review praised the book as 'a work of extraordinary merit' (p. 112), but found fault with Schlegel's recommendation of Winckelmann (p. 119).

97 Lectures, I.9.



in his review,<sup>98</sup> the first part of this principle would already be familiar to those who knew the writings of Lessing and Herder (only a few people in 1815); but what is important is that Schlegel constantly stressed and exemplified his belief in the relationship between Greek drama and Greek sculpture, and that his lectures became popular with an English public already fashionably absorbed in the admiration of Greek sculpture.

Schlegel did no more in the first lecture than state that Greek poetry and sculpture were spiritually akin. Towards the end of the second lecture he returned to this point, when he advised those who were not acquainted with Greek literature in the original that the best way of achieving some understanding of its spirit was to study the writings of Winckelmann.<sup>99</sup> If Wordsworth had been reading Schlegel in 1815, this may explain why he mentioned Winckelmann in his letter to Haydon, to which reference has already been made (p. 85). Then in the third lecture, Schlegel made his first specific comparison of sculpture with Greek tragedy, when explaining the Greek convention of making the actors wear masks, and trying to resolve the obvious difficulty in comparing the nude form common in Greek statuary with the elaborately clothed and artificially masked figures in the Greek theatre:

The forms of the masks, and the whole appearance of the tragic figures, we may easily suppose, were sufficiently beautiful and dignified. We should do well to have the ancient sculpture always present to our minds; and the most accurate conception perhaps, that we can possibly have, is to imagine them so many statues in the grand style endowed with life and motion. But, as in sculpture, they were fond of dispensing as much as possible with dress, for the sake of exhibiting the more essential beauty of the figure; on the stage they

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98 MR, lxxxi (1816), 115.

99 Lectures, I.45-47.

would endeavour from an opposite principle to clothe as much as they could well do, both from a regard to decency, and because the actual forms of the body would not correspond sufficiently with the beauty of the countenance.<sup>100</sup>

He returned to this comparison at the end of the lecture, this time elaborating it by likening Homeric epic to bas-relief, and drama to free-standing groups of statuary, his main point being that bas-reliefs, like the epic poems, are capable of infinite extension backwards or forwards, whilst our attention is focussed on only one section or episode at a time, whereas sculpture and drama place before us a single, clearly definable group.<sup>101</sup> Then, concentrating more closely on the comparison of drama and sculpture, he paraphrased Winckelmann's familiar idea that classical figure-groups combine emotion and repose in a unique equilibrium of beauty and anguish, and cited as examples the mythical characters Niobe and Laocoön, both of whom had been the subject of tragedies, as well as of sculpture.<sup>102</sup> Sara Coleridge, in her notes to her father's lecture-notes on Shakespeare, said that Schlegel might have been remembering, consciously or otherwise, Schelling's remarks on Niobe in Ueber der bildenden Künste, and possibly also Schelling's comments on painting and sculpture in Philosophische Schriften, 346-47.<sup>103</sup> But no matter what the true source of these ideas was, it was through Schlegel that they first percolated into the mind of the English public.

In Lecture IV Schlegel continued the comparison, to the

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100 Lectures, I.66-68.

101 Lectures, I.86-87.

102 Lectures, I.87-89.

103 Notes and Lectures upon Shakespeare and some of the Old Poets and Dramatists, with Other Literary Remains of S.T. Coleridge, ed. Mrs H.N. Coleridge, I.338.



extent of likening Aeschylus to Phidias, Sophocles to Polycleitus, and Euripides to Lysippus. The style of Aeschylus, he says, is 'grand, severe, and not unfrequently hard', while Phidias 'formed sublime images of the gods, but he was still attached to the extrinsic magnificence of materials'; the style of Sophocles exhibits 'the most complete proportion and harmonious sweetness', with which we may compare the work of Polycleitus which 'carried the art [of sculpture] to perfection, and hence one of his statues was called the rule of beauty'; Euripides' style is 'soft and luxuriant', 'extravagant in his easy fulness' and 'sacrifices the general effect to brilliant passages' in the same manner as Lysippus, whose works are full of 'fire', but depart from the perfection of earlier sculpture in being 'much more desirous of expressing the charm of motion and life than of adhering to ideality of form'.<sup>104</sup>

Even before the publication of the English translation of Schlegel's lectures, his comparison of Greek drama with sculpture had already been popularised in the lectures of Coleridge and possibly of Campbell. It had apparently become very fashionable for members of the upper classes of society to attend lectures rather than go to the theatre. People flocked to hear Flaxman at the Royal Academy or Sir Humphry Davy at the Royal Institution, and the crowds who were drawn by Sydney Smith's lectures even blocked the streets an hour before he was due to begin.<sup>105</sup> Hazlitt

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104 Lectures, I.91-92.

105 Cruse, 195-96. Flaxman apparently applied unsuccessfully for permission to borrow casts of the Elgin Marbles for a lecture on sculpture in 1812. See A.H. Smith, 314.

and Campbell also gave lectures, but Thomas Moore, although tempted, declined an invitation to lecture at the Royal Institution in 1813, because some of his friends thought it 'infra dig'.<sup>106</sup> Coleridge lectured because he desperately needed the money.<sup>107</sup>

His first lecture course, delivered in 1808, seems to have touched on Greek drama, but as far as one can tell from the brief notes made by H.C. Robinson,<sup>108</sup> Coleridge did not do much more than suggest the origin of Greek drama in religious ceremonial. The lectures were well attended at first, but because the lecturer was unpunctual and ill-prepared, his audiences dwindled,<sup>109</sup> and probably learned nothing of permanent value. The second series of lectures, which ran from 18 November 1811 to 27 January 1812, spanned the controversial period in which Coleridge seems first to have read Schlegel's lectures (in German) and to have begun using them without proper acknowledgement in his own lectures.<sup>110</sup> Coleridge was certainly familiar with the Vorlesungen before giving his ninth lecture on 16 December 1811, as he himself admitted,<sup>111</sup> and may well have had some knowledge of them earlier,

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106 The Letters of Thomas Moore, ed. Wilfred S. Dowden, I.267.

107 Our knowledge of Coleridge's lectures depends mostly upon newspaper reports, and the occasional remarks in contemporary letters and diaries, as well as the various fragmentary lecture-notes and marginalia published after Coleridge's death by Henry Nelson Coleridge. All of these are included in Coleridge's Shakespeare Criticism, ed. Thomas Middleton Raysor, referred to throughout as CSC.

108 CSC, II.7-8.

109 Cruse, 200.

110 I have not embarked on a discussion of this controversy since the precise date of Coleridge's acquaintance with Schlegel's Vorlesungen does not alter the fact that it was Coleridge who first introduced Schlegel's critical opinions to the English literary public and it is this fact that is of most importance to my argument. On the controversy, see CSC, I.xxx-xxxiii; Letters of S.T. Coleridge, III.359-60 and 359n.

111 CSC, II.164, referring to 'a German critic'.

since on 6 November he wrote to H.C. Robinson that he was 'very anxious to see Schlegel's Werke before the Lectures commence'.<sup>112</sup> Prior to the ninth lecture, the few references to Greek drama are derived from the generally familiar critics, such as Herder's statement that the unities developed from the physical requirements of the Greek theatre;<sup>113</sup> but in the ninth lecture Coleridge paraphrased Schlegel in comparing classical drama with sculpture and Shakespearean drama with painting:

In statuary, as in the Greek drama, the characters must be few, because the very essence of statuary is a high degree of abstraction, which prevents a great many figures being combined in the same effect. In a grand group of Niobe, or in any other ancient heroic subject, how disgusting even it would appear, if an old nurse were introduced. Not only the number of figures must be circumscribed, but nothing undignified must be placed in company with what is dignified: no one personage must be brought in that is not an abstraction . . . and the effect of multitude, if required, must be produced without the intermingling of anything discordant.<sup>114</sup>

Raysor points out that Coleridge was already familiar with the general comparison of sculpture and painting from Schiller,<sup>115</sup> and H.C. Robinson was dismissive of these 'old remarks',<sup>116</sup> but at this time only a very few men (and therefore only a minority of Coleridge's audience) had any first-hand knowledge of Schiller. This series of lectures was immensely popular, 'a kind of rage'

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112 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, III.343. The earliest reference Robinson makes in his diary to reading Schlegel's Vorlesungen appears to be in the entry dated 13 September 1812. He refers to Schlegel's 'very excellent' account of Sophocles and Aeschylus, and of 'the Trilogy', which means that he must have been reading Lecture IV. (Diary of H.C. Robinson, I.398)

113 CSC, II.72; see also CSC, I.xxxviii.

114 CSC, II.159.

115 CSC, II.160n<sup>1</sup>; see also Larrabee, 140.

116 CSC, II.218.

according to Byron,<sup>117</sup> and must have done a great deal to spread Schlegel's critical ideas.

In his lectures at Willis's Rooms in May-June 1812, Coleridge again made generous use of Schlegel. According to H.C. Robinson, whose diary entries are the only source of information, the second lecture on 23 May was 'a beautiful dissertation on the Greek drama', in which Coleridge's 'remarks on the antique tragedy were more connected, better and more closely reasoned than when delivered in Fetter Lane' the previous winter.<sup>118</sup> The third lecture on 26 May, 'wholly on the Greek drama', made Schlegel's comparison of the three tragedians with the three Greek sculptors. Robinson's verdict was 'excellent'.<sup>119</sup>

The next lecture series, delivered at the Surrey Institution in the winter of 1812-1813, repeated material which was becoming familiar, even 'dull',<sup>120</sup> to regular lecture-goers. The lecture notes on Greek drama extant in a Coleridge manuscript were probably used for the fourth lecture at the Surrey Institution, and perhaps also for the second and third — and very likely represent Coleridge's borrowings from Schlegel in the two previous lecture courses.<sup>121</sup> The debt to Schlegel is obvious and almost total,<sup>122</sup> although Coleridge also compared Greek tragedy with opera, a comparison Schlegel had made only to reject it as fallacious.<sup>123</sup> Coleridge was ill when the series began, and therefore did not

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117 Byron's Letters and Journals, II.149.

118 CSC, II.243.

119 CSC, II.243.

120 H.C. Robinson's verdict. See CSC, II.249.

121 Reprinted in CSC, I.167-76.

122 See CSC, I.168-76.

123 CSC, I.175. Compare Lectures, I.69-71.



... speak well, but he gradually improved and was loudly applauded at the final lecture.<sup>124</sup>

In the winter of 1813-1814 Coleridge passed on Schlegel's ideas to the people of Bristol, telling them in his first lecture that Greek drama was statuesque and that modern drama was picturesque, extending the comparison to include Schlegel's image drawn from architecture:

The Greeks reared a structure, which, in its parts and as a whole, filled the mind with the calm and elevated impression of perfect beauty and symmetrical proportion. The moderns, blending materials, produced one striking whole. This may be illustrated by comparing the Pantheon with York Minster or Westminster Abbey. Upon the same scale we may compare Sophocles with Shakespeare.<sup>125</sup>

These lectures were popular and well-attended, according to Coleridge's friend Joseph Cottle, and they presumably reached a wider audience through the favourable reports published in the Bristol Gazette.<sup>126</sup>

Coleridge gave his last series of lectures in 1818 at the rooms of the Philosophical Society in London. The short report of the fourth lecture in the Courier, 9 February 1818, indicates that Coleridge made only a passing reference to Greek tragedy, repeating his comparison of Greek tragedy with opera.<sup>127</sup> On 18 May 1825 Coleridge read his 'Essay on the Prometheus of Aeschylus' to members of the Royal Society of Literature, but this essay has practically nothing to do with Greek drama and was as incomprehensible to Coleridge's unfortunate audience as it is to

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124 CSC, II.250.

125 CSC, II.262. Compare Lectures, I.9-11.

126 CSC, II.253.

127 CSC, II.313.

anyone who tries to make sense of it today.<sup>128</sup> Coleridge had, however, contemplated including something on 'the Origin of Statuary as a Fine Art that is, as a form or species of Poesy', and to this end had visited Flaxman at his workshop on 25 January 1825.<sup>129</sup> Because Coleridge's lectures varied so much in quality, and because our knowledge of them is often meagre, it is difficult to assess with any confidence the extent of his influence in persuading people to take an interest in Greek drama. But it is fair to say that because his lectures were fashionable and (no less important) repetitive, quite a few members of his audience must have been induced to read some Greek tragedy, which at this time would probably mean reading Potter's translation.

Thomas Campbell was also lecturing at much the same time as Coleridge. In April 1812 he gave a series of lectures on poetry at the Royal Institution, of which part of the second and the third were on Greek poetry,<sup>130</sup> and for which he was paid the handsome sum of 20 guineas per lecture.<sup>131</sup> In 1813 he gave a second course, which was well received.<sup>132</sup> Indeed, an acquaintance of H.C. Robinson, who had attended the lectures of both Campbell

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128 This essay, privately printed in 25 copies in 1825, was reprinted in The Literary Remains of S.T. Coleridge, ed. H.N. Coleridge, II.323-59. See also Letters of S.T. Coleridge, V. 461, 463.

129 Michael Kellaway, 'Samuel Taylor Coleridge: the Highgate Years, 1816-1834' (unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh, 1974), 169.

130 Beattie, II.210.

131 Cyrus Redding, Literary Reminiscences and Memoirs of Thomas Campbell, I.98.

132 Beattie, II.228. Campbell's MS notes for this lecture, entitled 'Drama — June, 1813' are in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow (MS. 75/33). They say nothing of the relationship between sculpture and tragedy, but are a simple introduction to Greek drama, illustrated with quotations from Potter's translations.



and Coleridge, thought Coleridge was 'infinitely inferior to Campbell, who it appears is exceedingly admired'.<sup>133</sup> Campbell visited Paris in 1814, where he renewed his acquaintance with Schlegel, whom he had first met in Germany in 1800,<sup>134</sup> and the two now became good friends.<sup>135</sup> It was on this visit to France that Campbell was so impressed by the Greco-Roman statues in the Louvre, and when Campbell lectured in Liverpool in the autumn of 1818, he introduced frequent allusions to Greek sculpture into his earlier lecture material.<sup>136</sup> One allusion in particular to the Apollo Belvedere, which arose from a discussion of the character of Apollo as represented by Euripides, had an electrifying effect on his audience, as one critic subsequently reported:

He described. . . the impressions made upon his own mind, on the first sight of that inimitable statue in the Louvre, a few years since. We have before witnessed many attempts in speaking, and writing, to convey an idea of this species of creation, but in poetical conception, and felicitous expression, we never saw, or heard, anything comparable to the description of Mr. Campbell.<sup>137</sup>

In 1819 he also lectured in Birmingham, and in May 1820 he was at the London Institution.<sup>138</sup>

It seems that the basic material of Campbell's lectures did not vary much from place to place (no need, since each audience was different), and when in 1819 he decided not to accept any more invitations to lecture in the country, he began to consider

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133 Henry Crabb Robinson on Books and Their Writers, ed. Edith J. Morley, I.88.

134 Redding, Literary Reminiscences, I.54-55.

135 Beattie, II.273.

136 Beattie, II.341-42.

137 Beattie, II.342.

138 Beattie, II.356.

writing up his lecture notes for publication.<sup>139</sup> His project was never fully realised, since the lectures never did appear in book form, but Campbell made the most of his appointment as editor of the New Monthly Magazine by stipulating in his contract that he was to provide twelve articles, including 'the whole value and substance of the Lectures on Poetry, now delivering at the Royal Institution'.<sup>140</sup> In the event, a total of sixteen articles, covering twelve lectures, were published between 1820 and 1826, appearing only sporadically, but always as the leading article in that particular number of the magazine.<sup>141</sup> The series was not in fact completed, since Campbell was constitutionally incapable of persevering with 'a long labour upon one subject',<sup>142</sup> and abandoned the project at the end of his lectures on Greek tragedy, which appeared in 1825 and 1826.<sup>143</sup>

The lectures printed in the New Monthly Magazine were probably a much revised version of the lectures delivered orally. As we have them, they are generally lifeless, prolix and unduly digressive, and would have been unbearably dull to listen to. The first lectures plod through the earliest beginnings of Hebrew and Greek poetry, with long digressions on the Dorian invasion, the Delphic Oracle, the constitution of Sparta and other apparently

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139 Beattie, II.351.

140 Beattie, II.357.

141 NMM, i (1821), 1-15, 129-41, 377-87, 489-500; ii (1821), 1-15, 225-40, 433-42; iv (1822), 193-99, 385-95; xiii (1825), 1-11, 217-33; xvi (1826), 1-10, 233-42, 520-32; xvii (1826), 97-108, 393-403.

142 Redding, Literary Reminiscences, I.99.

143 See Appendix 5. The two-year gap from 1822-1825 may have been caused by Campbell's failing interest in the series of articles, but possibly he was revising his lectures on Greek tragedy.

relevant topics. It is not until the appearance of the first article on Greek drama that Campbell's work comes to life. It was a subject for which Campbell had had a special affection since his schooldays.<sup>144</sup> At Glasgow University he had won a prize for some passages translated from Aristophanes, and a few passages translated from the Medea had gained for him the friendship and patronage of the professors.<sup>145</sup> In the summer of 1795, which he spent in the splendid isolation of Mull, he had worked on translations of the Clouds, Choephoroe and Medea, and for a year or so had nursed the vain hope that the two latter translations could be profitably published; but because the interest of the publishers in Edinburgh and London had been lukewarm at best, he had taken his plans no further.<sup>146</sup> Now, after having achieved some success as a poet and lecturer, 'the gigantic structures of the Greek drama were still floating in airy vision before his eyes',<sup>147</sup> and he lavished much time and toil on his articles on tragedy, as is shown by a letter of 25 November 1825 to a friend:

I am immersed in the obscure points of the Greek drama; and some of them I am in hopes of settling, at least, to my own satisfaction. . . . Our glorious old English Bentley, and the best modern German scholars, present views and proofs of the subject, beyond what I had dared to hope for, analogous to my own involuntarily formed opinions.<sup>148</sup>

Cyrus Redding, who knew Campbell well at this time, says he threw his heart and soul into the work.<sup>149</sup>

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144 See Beattie, I.36; Redding, Literary Reminiscences, II.95.

145 Beattie, I.94, 101.

146 Beattie, I.135, 140, 148, 151, 165, 192, 198-99; Redding, Literary Reminiscences, I.23, 26-27.

147 Beattie, I.38.

148 Beattie, II.454-55.

149 Redding, Literary Reminiscences, I.129.

In the published lectures, Campbell's inevitable debt to Schlegel is clear from the references he makes to the German critic;<sup>150</sup> but this is not to deny that Campbell was widely read in all the extant writings on Greek drama, referring also to Suidas,<sup>151</sup> Bentley,<sup>152</sup> Barthélemy,<sup>153</sup> Schütz<sup>154</sup> and many others, and quoting from the translations of Francklin,<sup>155</sup> Potter<sup>156</sup> and Dale.<sup>157</sup> As a result, the influence of Schlegel is diluted, not least because Campbell was less interested in theoretical speculation than in describing the physical appearance of the Greek theatre and explaining the work of the tragedians, as he himself stated: 'It is my main and specific object to give some idea of the beauties of the Greek Muse, to those who may have had few or no opportunities of otherwise attending to the subject', a subject, moreover, which he believed to be 'capable of yielding popular amusement'.<sup>158</sup> He was also much more sympathetic than Schlegel towards Euripides, perhaps because he was temperamentally better able to appreciate Euripides' 'romantic' attempt to introduce real people with real feelings into his plays, and less perturbed by Euripides' apparent inability to construct a proper plot.<sup>159</sup>

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150 For example, NMM, xvi (1826), 6, 236; xvii (1826), 395.

151 NMM, xvi (1826), 234, 521.

152 NMM, xvi (1826), 1.

153 NMM, xvi (1826), 234.

154 NMM, xvi (1826), 238.

155 NMM, xvi (1826), 531.

156 NMM, xvi (1826), 238-41.

157 NMM, xvii (1826), 104-06.

158 NMM, xiii (1825), 1-2.

159 Compare Campbell's sympathetic treatment of Euripides in NMM, xvii (1826), 403, with the harsh criticism of Schlegel in Lectures, I.138-89.



Campbell's lectures appeared at a crucial time for interest in Greek tragedy. The furore surrounding the purchase of the Elgin Marbles and Napoleon's plundering of Italy had died down; fewer people were travelling to Greece, although the Greek rebellion was helping to keep interest in Greece alive; the best poetry of the age had been written, leaving a gap waiting for something to fill it. Coleridge's lectures, having only the limited force of all words heard but not read, had little importance in the 1820s and 1830s; but although most of Campbell's lectures deserved Charles Knight's verdict of 'elegant and dull',<sup>160</sup> the last few on Greek tragedy were valuable for all readers interested in the subject because, as Cyrus Redding said, 'a good part of what he gave was a charming addition to our stock of knowledge relative to Greece, in a very condensed form, the fruit of much research'.<sup>161</sup> And although there is no need to exalt the quality of Campbell's work by pretending it to be a major contribution to classical scholarship, it was ideally suited to the 'mere reading public',<sup>162</sup> who subscribed to the New Monthly Magazine at that time.

As for Schlegel, his Lectures were universally read by all people interested in Greek literature, and a reference to his work was unavoidable for all writers on Greek drama, whether they agreed with him or not. Shelley read Schlegel aloud to his companions as they travelled through France,<sup>163</sup> and a few months

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160 Passages, I.271.

161 Redding, Literary Reminiscences, I.129.

162 Referring to the NMM under Campbell's editorship, Redding, Literary Reminiscences, I.204, described it as 'a work better suited to the mere reading public, than adapted to the ideal excellence and lofty desires of those who have thought deeply, acquired much knowledge, and would fain move the feelings of mankind to lofty ends'.

163 Mary W. Shelley, Journal, 93.

later, in May 1818, sent his copy to John Gisborne.<sup>164</sup> In 1825 the Monthly Review found fault with Schlegel's comparison of drama and sculpture, saying that the emotions aroused by looking at a group of statuary are not the same as those aroused by watching a play.<sup>165</sup> The Westminster Review disagreed with Schlegel's low estimate of Aristophanes' Birds.<sup>166</sup> Henry Nelson Coleridge, writing about Potter's Aeschylus in the Quarterly Review in 1831, praised both Flaxman and Schlegel together, saying that Flaxman had done for 'the outer forms of these productions' what the Schlegel brothers had done 'in seizing the true genius and spirit of the inner form of Greek tragedy'.<sup>167</sup> Thomas Medwin prefixed the 1832 editions of his translations of the Agamemnon and Prometheus with an 'argument' for each play, which he took from Black's translation of Schlegel.<sup>168</sup> By this time the Lectures were so popular that the Gentleman's Magazine cuttingly referred to them as 'that perpetual crib for all contributors of tinsel articles to our popular Magazines, Reviews, and Penny papers'.<sup>169</sup>

In 1840 J.S. Blackie wrote warmly in the Foreign Quarterly Review about the importance of Schlegel's work in initiating a proper understanding of Greek literature, and in banishing 'patronizing criticism' and deflating 'the small kid-glove men who measured the giants of nature's growth as tailors measured kings,

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164 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.17.

165 MR, cvi (1825), 113.

166 WR, ii (1824), 263.

167 QR, xliv (1831), 392.

168 Compare Medwin's Agamemnon, v, with Lectures, I.96-100; and Medwin's Prometheus (1832), vii, with Lectures, I.112-14.

169 GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 31.



by externalities only'.<sup>170</sup> Blackie set aside a few minor criticisms of Schlegel to embark on a eulogy which provides a fitting end to this chapter:

Schlegel was triumphant in all the reviews; and not in the reviews only; but into the cramming books of the Oxonians also he came, and seemed nearly as important a person as Porson; the sentence about the Niobe and the Laocoon was hawked about small periodicals and young men's essays, as frequently as Rory O'More is whistled through the street. . . . To Schlegel we owe almost every thing that our classical criticism is or attempts to be. It is the part of national gratitude to acknowledge the obligation.<sup>171</sup>

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170 FQR, xxiv (1840), 263-64.

171 FQR, xxiv (1840), 264.

## CHAPTER 5. THE 'MERE READING PUBLIC'

It is a subject, which I believe to be capable of yielding popular amusement; but being connected with research, and, at the same time, addressed to promiscuous readers, it evidently needs considerable management, to treat it accurately without being dry, and to make it entertaining without becoming superficial.

Thomas Campbell on Greek poetry, NMM, xiii (1825), 2.

One of the main difficulties in any attempt to assess popular interest in Greek tragedy is the scarcity of comments on the subject in the letters and journals of people other than classical scholars. Fortunately, the number and diversity of the periodical publications in the early nineteenth century do much to compensate. The emergence of the Edinburgh Review (1802) and its Quarterly rival (1809), and then of Blackwood's Magazine (1817) and its rivals, came at a time of interest in Greece, and one would expect that if the interest was popular, and directed particularly towards Greek drama, the choice of articles for these new periodicals ought to provide corroborating evidence, since new magazines anxious to increase their circulation would surely try to include articles on subjects known to be of interest to their potential readership. Conversely, the already established magazines relied heavily on their readers for contributions, and their interests must be reflected in the selection of articles for publication; and in addition, the need to compete with the newer magazines from about 1817 onwards must inevitably have influenced their choice of material.

With this in mind, I have selected a representative sample from the many periodicals of the years 1800-1840, and examined this sample for signs of interest in Greek tragedy. I have tried to balance the new periodicals against those old-fashioned survivors from the eighteenth century which managed to keep going well into the nineteenth, in order to see whether there was any significant change in interest. The sample consists of twenty periodicals, divided into six groups as follows:

1. As representatives of old-fashioned Reviews, the British Critic and the Monthly Review, and probably the Eclectic Review.
2. As representatives of the new Reviews, the Edinburgh Review, the Quarterly Review and the Westminster Review. The Foreign Quarterly Review may also be included here.
3. As representatives of the old-fashioned magazines, the Gentleman's Magazine, the European Magazine and the Monthly Magazine.
4. As representatives of the new magazines, Blackwood's Magazine, the New Monthly Magazine, the London Magazine, Fraser's Magazine and the Metropolitan. The Penny Magazine, which was intended for a lower social class, is also included.
5. As representatives of weekly literary journals, the Literary Gazette and the Athenaeum.
6. Two specialist magazines, the Classical Journal and the Philological Museum.

The criteria adopted in the survey are these:

1. To confirm that there is more interest in Greek literature than Latin literature.
2. To establish the nature and proportion of interest in Greek tragedy.

3. To discover what importance is given to translations.

A chart summarising the numbers of classical books and translations reviewed (Figure 3) is provided on page 120.

#### A. The Old-Fashioned Reviews

It had been the express purpose of the Reviews founded in the eighteenth century to include articles on all new publications, in order to keep their readers as fully informed as possible. By the end of the eighteenth century, so many books were being published that this was no longer feasible, and Reviews often compromised by having about eight long articles reviewing the most important new books, followed by a number of much shorter articles noticing as many other books as they had space to include. The reviews themselves were often largely summaries of the books being reviewed, although the writers also usually offered their critical judgement. The old jibe that these reviews were invariably the work of ill-paid hacks has been quite rightly demolished by John Hayden and Derek Roper,<sup>1</sup> and although they can in no way be called 'avant-garde', they generally seem to reflect the opinions of the informed and well-read men in society. In the nineteenth century competition from the new Reviews caused the editors of the older Reviews to reassess editorial policy, but they clung as long as possible to the old plan of informing their readers about as many books as they had space to mention.

The Monthly Review.<sup>2</sup> The Monthly Review tried for many years

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1 See John O. Hayden, The Romantic Reviewers, 1802-1824, 7-74; and Derek Roper, Reviewing before the Edinburgh, 1788-1802, 19-48.

2 See Walter Graham, English Literary Periodicals, 209-12; and Hayden, 40-42.

Figure 3 Reviews of Classical Books and Translations, 1800-1840

	GREEK PROSE		GREEK VERSE		LATIN PROSE		LATIN VERSE		Total
	Edns.	Translations	Edns.	Translations	Edns.	Translations	Edns.	Translations	
<u>Ath</u>	10	5	11	19	10	4	8	7	74
<u>BC</u>	2	7	14	25	3	1	6	25	83
<u>Bl</u>	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	2	7
<u>EcR</u>	3	9	5	14	4	0	5	16	56
<u>EM</u>	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	2	8
<u>ER</u>	7	1	8	9	1	1	1	4	32
<u>FM</u>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
<u>FQR</u>	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
<u>GM</u>	11	7	5	22	6	3	5	16	75
<u>LG</u>	8	8	8	14	8	1	7	7	61
<u>LM</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
<u>Met</u>	0	1	0	9	2	1	0	2	15
<u>MM</u>	6	5	3	14	5	1	3	14	51
<u>MR</u>	6	16	19	35	4	6	5	39	130
<u>NMM</u>	0	1	0	10	1	0	0	3	15
<u>QR</u>	3	1	12	12	0	0	1	7	36
<u>WR</u>	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	0	10

Note:

1. For any book containing material of more than one kind (e.g. a book of translations from both Greek and Latin poetry), an entry has been made under all appropriate headings.
2. Long reviews extending to two or more articles have been counted once only.
3. The two specialist magazines, the Classical Journal and the Philological Museum, are not included; nor is the Penny Magazine, which did not review classical books.
4. Brief notices with no criticism are not included.



to review as many new books as possible, but from 1826 it dropped its 'Monthly Catalogue' of minor publications and published fewer, longer reviews, in the manner already established by the Edinburgh and Quarterly. As is to be expected, all translations of tragedy up till 1826 are reviewed,<sup>3</sup> including even the specimens of Sophocles which Thomas Dale published in The Outlaw of Taurus in 1820. Symmons's translation of the Agamemnon was deemed worthy of review in the leading article of February 1825, and in the following month Dale's Sophocles was likewise reviewed in the leading article. Even John Smith's curious pastiche of Greek tragedy, The House of Atreus, was noticed in 1820. After 1826, the only translation reviewed was the inconsequential Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles. Reviews of new editions of Greek tragedy are almost entirely concerned with textual criticism and rarely have anything to say about the literary merits of the tragedies concerned. Butler's edition of Aeschylus was reviewed in 1810, 1815 and 1819, and Burges's editions of the Phoenissae and Troades in 1812. When Blomfield's editions of Prometheus Vincetus, Septem and Persae were reviewed together in 1816, they received rather grudging approval, in contrast to the warm welcome given to Butler's outdated text and encyclopaedic notes. In the 1830s, almost the only editions of classical texts to be reviewed were Major's editions of Orestes and Alcestis, the latter review being particularly interesting because it illustrates the change in attitude to tragedy since about 1820: it is critical of the

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3 Appendices 1-5 include information about Greek tragedy in articles, translations and reviews in the periodicals. Footnote references will be given only for such items as are not readily identifiable by referring to the appropriate Appendix. The translations themselves will be examined in Chapters 8-10.



pedantry of scholars who have spent too little time trying to appreciate and pass on the literary qualities of what they are studying.

The British Critic.<sup>4</sup> Like the Monthly Review, the British Critic was a monthly publication with about six longish articles followed by a 'British Catalogue' of much shorter reviews, until 1825, when it had to succumb to economic pressures and became a quarterly with fewer and longer articles. From January 1826 its choice of books for review was almost exclusively theological, with only six classical reviews — all of Greek literature. Only a few translations of tragedy were noticed. The article on Smith's The House of Atreus begins with some very sensible remarks on the problems involved in the proper appreciation of Greek tragedy, and criticises Smith's futile attempt at solving the problem by rewriting the tragedies. A review of T.W.C. Edwards's prose 'crib' of the Hecuba is prefaced by an attack on literal translations. In 1832 an article entitled 'The Characters of the Greek Dramatic Poets' begins as a review of the translations of Harford and Medwin, and of the anonymous Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles, but is mainly taken up with a general account of the work of the three tragedians. In the following year Anstice's Selections from the Choric Poetry of the Greek Dramatic Writers was reviewed. The reviews of editions of Greek drama were mostly scholarly in approach. Butler's Aeschylus, Blomfield's Prometheus Vincetus, Septem and Choephoroe, Gaisford's Sophocles and Scholefield's edition of Porson's Euripides were all reviewed in this manner; but in 1816 a review of Monk's Alcestis struck a different note by

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4 See Graham, 221-22; Hayden, 44-45.

beginning with the wish that someone would try to translate the Alcestis into English, as its many 'passages of genuine and unaffected pathos' offered 'the most ample scope for the high and commanding powers of our British Melpomene', and then summarising the plot for readers unfamiliar with it.

The Eclectic Review.<sup>5</sup> For its first ten years the Eclectic Review carried, on average, 3 to 4 articles on classical books per annum, but after 1814 classical literature was not given much space, apart from a period between 1820 and 1825. Reviews in this period included a leading article on Dale's Sophocles in October 1824, and a review of Symmons's translation of the Agamemnon. The latter was combined with a review of Boyd's prose translation of the same play, and also included a brief history of the early development of Greek tragedy and an account of the distinguishing features of Aeschylean style. Palin's Persians was the only later translation of Greek tragedy thought worthy of mention. Butler's Aeschylus was given a rather brief review and Blomfield's work was ignored altogether. The only other edition of Greek tragedy to be reviewed was Major's edition of the Hecuba.

#### B. The New Reviews

The Edinburgh Review.<sup>6</sup> The bias towards Greek literature in the Edinburgh Review is very marked, but it did not show a great deal of interest in Greek tragedy. The editions of tragedy reviewed were Butler's Aeschylus, Blomfield's Prometheus Vincetus and Porson's Hecuba, and the reviews themselves were concerned

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5 See Graham, 239; Hayden, 47-49.

6 See Graham, 233-36; Hayden, 8-22; The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900, ed. Walter E. Houghton, I.416-29.

only with the editors' notes and choice of text. Verse translations of tragedy were completely ignored, although an article ostensibly reviewing T.W.C. Edwards's prose 'crib' of Oedipus Tyrannus was published in 1828. This was in the main a critical discussion of Greek tragedy in general, which the writer, John Williams, seemed to think was more studied in the universities than it really deserved.

The Quarterly Review.<sup>7</sup> Like the Edinburgh, the Quarterly Review showed a very marked preference for Greek literature, although the Quarterly had the better reputation for the quality of its classical reviews.<sup>8</sup> In 1810 there were rather critical reviews of Burges's Troades and Phoenissae, and of Butler's Aeschylus. Blomfield's Prometheus Vincetus was more favourably reviewed by Monk, who found space to remark that people should now more easily be able to appreciate Aeschylus' fine characterisation and admirable style. Other plays reviewed were Markland's edition of Supplices, Iphigeneia in Aulide and Iphigeneia in Tauris, Monk's editions of Hippolytus and Alcestis, Elmsley's edition of the Heraclidae and Blomfield's edition of Agamemnon. After 1821 there were no reviews of tragedy until 1839, when Robert Scott wrote an article entitled 'Modern Criticism on Aeschylus — Life and Character of Aeschylus', reviewing three German editions of Aeschylus and complaining of the dearth of English work on Aeschylus since Blomfield's Agamemnon had appeared. The only translations of tragedy to be reviewed were Dale's Sophocles and

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7 See Graham, 241-48; Hayden, 22-38; Wellesley Index, I.696-702.

8 See Letters of S.T. Coleridge, V.441-42; Redding, Fifty Years' Recollections, I.71.

the reprint of Potter's Aeschylus in Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets, which shared an article by H.N. Coleridge with two editions of Aristophanes' Frogs. In 1840 H.N. Coleridge included a review of Elizabeth Barrett's Prometheus Bound in his article 'Modern English Poetesses'.<sup>9</sup>

The Westminster Review.<sup>10</sup> After its foundation in 1824 the Westminster Review published 10 reviews of classical books, which compares quite favourably with the Quarterly (16 reviews) and the Edinburgh (13 reviews) for the same period. However, the Westminster used these reviews mainly as an excuse to attack the Quarterly Review for its strong criticism of Athenian democracy. The only edition of Greek tragedy reviewed was Brasse's school edition of the Oedipus Coloneus.

The Foreign Quarterly Review.<sup>11</sup> From the foundation of the Foreign Quarterly Review in 1827 up to 1840 only five classical articles were published, all of which dealt with Greek literature, although only two were actually reviews. Three of the articles were concerned with Greek tragedy: one reviewed Dindorf's Poetae Scenici Graeci;<sup>12</sup> a second, entitled 'Volpicella on the Greek Tragedies', summarised the contents of an Italian book about Greek tragedy; the third is the only interesting article, being J.S. Blackie's article on 'Euripides and the Greek Drama', with its eulogy of Schlegel.

As far as the Reviews are concerned, this survey has proved

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9 QR, lxvi (1840), 374-418.

10 See Graham, 251-54; Wellesley Index, III.528-56.

11 See Wellesley Index, II.129-38.

12 FQR, vii (1831), 245-48.

rather inconclusive. The older Reviews seem to have felt that classical literature was important, but not so important that they must continue to review classical books when fighting to avoid losing their readers to the newer Reviews. By the late 1820s the British Critic and the Eclectic Review had opted to concentrate on religious books, leaving only the Monthly Review to continue the struggle. All of the Reviews felt that the scholarly work on tragedy, especially on Aeschylus, was worthy of their attention, but reviews of such works were almost always written by scholars for scholars, and made very little concession to the non-classical reader. It is tempting to think that the editors either did not envisage a readership containing any great number of non-classicists, or that the occasional article on classical literature was included only for the sake of appearances, but there is a distinct lack of evidence for either suggestion. Peacock's complaint in 1818 that until recently the popular periodicals usually had a classical article 'for the grace of keeping up appearances', but no longer do so,<sup>13</sup> does not necessarily support the latter, because he was probably thinking of the philological articles that had once appeared in magazines like the Gentleman's Magazine. The failure of the Edinburgh and the Quarterly to review new translations of tragedy is also disappointing, not to say puzzling, in view of the interest taken in the older Reviews and (as will be seen) in the magazines. One might perhaps take this resounding silence as an indication that the quality of the translations was thought to be beneath the notice of such majestic Reviews, which also did not think that popularising articles on

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13 Works of T.L. Peacock, VIII.271.



Greek tragedy would have any interest for their readers, but since both of these great Reviews, early in their life, had spoken with approval of the work of translators,<sup>14</sup> this seems unlikely. The best explanation is that their growing preoccupation with politics reduced the space available for articles on other subjects, translation being only one of these.

### C. The Old-Fashioned Magazines

The typical eighteenth-century magazine was a hotch-potch of articles and letters on all kinds of subjects, along with notices of stocks and shares, announcements of births, marriages and deaths, and lists of bankruptcies and commodity prices. Anything and everything might be included, so that one might find an article of advice on growing turnips alongside a letter proposing a new interpretation of an obscure line in Virgil. It was the kind of periodical that appealed to the leisured classes, and its gradual decline in the early decades of the nineteenth century seems to coincide with the emergence of a new reading public, drawn largely from the commercial and professional classes, whose interests were different, whose classical learning was not so profound, and who preferred lighter reading material for their moments of leisure. As with the Reviews, the appearance of new magazines forced the survivors from the eighteenth century to rethink their editorial policy, however reluctantly, and this resulted in longer articles and less space for the chronicles of 'useful' facts.

The Gentleman's Magazine.<sup>15</sup> The editorial policy of the

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14 See Chapter 1, notes 35 and 36.

15 See Graham, 150-61; Hayden, 55-56.



Gentleman's Magazine ensured the inclusion of classical articles, but it persisted in preferring an interest in philology to an interest in literature — and also persisted, in a manner worthy of its eighteenth-century origins, in devoting more space to Horace than to all other classical authors put together. After about 1811 such philological articles virtually disappeared from the columns of the Gentleman's Magazine because of the commencement of the Classical Journal (1810-1829) and then the Museum Criticum (1813-1826), which specialised in such material.<sup>16</sup> After 1821, when the Gentleman's Magazine began to include longer articles, there was even less space for the classics, until in 1827 (perhaps yielding a little to popular pressure) a short series called 'Beauties of the Ancient Poets' appeared.<sup>17</sup> This was a series of translations, beginning with an extract from the Oedipus Tyrannus. In the following year there was another three-part series 'On the Ancient Tragedy and Comedy', which was disappointingly bereft of any intelligent and informative remarks on the nature of Greek drama, being merely a collection of quotations from Aristotle and Horace, followed by an attack on the popular preference for vulgar and sensational shows. The June supplement in 1828 also carried a paraphrased version of a scene from the Orestes. Between 1829 and 1834 the Gentleman's Magazine again became a repository for philological speculation, but there were no more general-interest articles on Greek tragedy.

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16 In GM, c<sup>1</sup> (1830), 291, the editor invited classical scholars to use the columns of the Gentleman's Magazine once more, as they had formerly done before the foundation of the Classical Journal, which was now defunct.

17 GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1827), 499-500; xcvi<sup>2</sup> (1827), 33-34, 126-27.

The section reserved for new poetry often included translations from the classics, although there were hardly any after 1821, when the poetry section was shortened. As one might expect, the majority of these translations were from Horace and Anacreon, but in 1814 and 1815 there were also some translations from tragedy, possibly not unconnected with current interest in Schlegel's lectures. In February 1814 there was a translation of a passage from the Hippolytus; in September 1815 a chorus from the Oedipus Coloneus; and a passage from the Medea in October 1815.

The review section regularly found space for classical works, but these reviews were often very short, and tended rather to inform readers of the existence of the books in question than to offer any words of praise or censure. The attention given to Greek tragedy was patchy: Blomfield's edition of Prometheus Vincetus, Monk's Hippolytus, Scholefield's Aeschylus and Burges's Philoctetes. Of translations before 1830, only Boyd's prose translation of the Agamemnon was reviewed; but in the 1830s every single verse translation, however unworthy, received uniformly admiring attention. This is surely a tacit admission on the part of the editor that, despite the magazine's sneers in 1833 at 'tinsel articles' on Greek tragedy,<sup>18</sup> it was a subject of considerable interest to the reading public at that time.

The European Magazine.<sup>19</sup> Until about 1814 the classical articles in the European Magazine are, to say the least, dull, being scholarly notes on obscure or disputed passages, rather than articles of general information. From 1801 to 1813 there was an

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18 See Chapter 4, note 169.

19 See Graham, 182-83; Hayden, 56-57.

amazing series of articles on the little known (and even less read) Greek poet Lycophron, each article usually consisting of Greek text, translations in Latin and English, and learned notes. A similar series of articles on Pindar appeared from 1803 to 1811, and on Horace from 1810 to 1811.<sup>20</sup> Other articles and letters appeared from time to time offering suggestions on passages in various other authors, but they were fewer in number after 1814 and disappeared altogether after 1820. In 1822 there appeared two long articles on the history of drama, inspired, perhaps, by the popularity of Schlegel's Lectures. The first two pages of the first article were naturally given over to Greek tragedy, describing its origins, its conventions and its importance to the Athenians, with a thumbnail sketch of 'the dark genius of the terrible Eschylus', 'the divine Sophocles' and 'the mournful and tender Euripides' (p. 401). In 1824 there were three articles on Homer, intended to be the first of a series of articles on foreign poets, in response to the requests of several readers,<sup>21</sup> but this series died in 1826 when the European Magazine merged with the Monthly Magazine. The regular review section of the magazine occasionally included short reviews of editions and translations of classical works, but none were of Greek tragedy. Another regular feature was the publication of translations of classical poetry in the section reserved for original poetry. Almost all of these were from Anacreon and Horace.

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20 Articles of purely philological content will not be itemised either in these notes or in the appendices, being of little intrinsic interest. However, the articles referred to may be easily found by consulting the indices of the relevant volumes of the magazines concerned.

21 EM, lxxxv (1824), 1.

The Monthly Magazine.<sup>22</sup> Until 1811 the Monthly Magazine regularly published the usual short articles on classical literature, covering a wide range of the best-known authors; but the editor seems to have been aware that his readers were not necessarily all classical scholars, for in January 1807 there began a series with the grandiose title of 'The Lycaenum of Ancient Literature', which was planned to give systematic coverage of every Greek and Latin writer, with biographies (when known), assessments of their work, and lists of the best editions and commentaries for those who wanted to pursue the subject further. This series ran more or less monthly until December 1810, in which time it covered epic, didactic, lyric, elegiac and pastoral poetry with encyclopaedic thoroughness.<sup>23</sup> The writer of this series then died, and no suitable successor was apparently found until 1822,<sup>24</sup> when the series was briefly resumed, but finally discontinued in the following year, after the conclusion of five more articles on elegiac poetry. This resumption may in part have been prompted by the need to find suitable material to compete with Campbell's articles on Greek poetry currently appearing in the rival New Monthly Magazine.

After the first cessation of the 'Lycaenum' at the end of 1810, there was an abortive attempt to replace it with an equally ambitious series, called 'History of Literature, from the Earliest

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22 See Graham, 189-90; Hayden, 57-58; Geoffrey Carnall, 'The Monthly Magazine', RES, n.s., v (1954), 158-64.

23 The first article appeared in MM, xxii (1806-07), 552-55, with a footnote on p. 552 outlining its intended scope. Subsequent articles may be found by consulting the indices of vols. xxii-xxx (1807-10) and vols. liii-lvi (1822-23).

24 See MM, liii (1822), 29n.

Period till the Destruction of the Roman Empire'.<sup>25</sup> This series got no further than its first dull article, and classical literature was generally ignored for a few years. Then, most probably prompted by public interest in Schlegel, a series of ten articles entitled 'Observations on the Grecian Tragic Drama' ran from August 1814 to December 1815. This series dealt with each of the three tragedians in turn, with short biographies, outlines of their main qualities, and accounts of all of their extant plays. Aeschylus, as usual, was represented as the flawed genius whose boldness often overreaches itself.<sup>26</sup> All of his plays were summarised without further comment, probably on the assumption that Aeschylus was too little known for a lengthier discussion to be of any value (or perhaps the writer of the article was himself rather ignorant of the qualities of Aeschylean drama). Sophocles, who was described as more regular and natural than Aeschylus,<sup>27</sup> was also apparently better known, since the writer ventured to talk admiringly about the Oedipus Tyrannus and Philoctetes without summarising them. He also particularly admired the Electra, but thought it would be less familiar than the other two plays to his readers, and therefore added a summary of its plot. When writing of Euripides, the writer followed what was to become the familiar Schlegelian doctrine that Euripides was generally inferior to Aeschylus and Sophocles, and successful only in scenes of tenderness and pathos.<sup>28</sup> He was also shocked by the atheism and

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25 MM, xxxi (1811), 136-38.

26 MM, xxxviii (1814-15), 411-12.

27 MM, xxxix (1815), 102.

28 MM, xxxix (1815), 206.



immorality he found in Euripides, which moved him to dismiss the Bacchae and Hippolytus as not worthy even of a summary,<sup>29</sup> and to give most space to the Phoenissae and Supplikes. Judging by the plays he particularly admired, one comes to the somewhat cynical conclusion that his knowledge of Greek drama did not extend in any great depth beyond the plays familiar from the Eton textbooks.

After this the classics were accorded only the occasional philological article (apart from the brief continuation of the 'Lycaenum of Ancient Literature') until 1826, when such articles vanished altogether, except for a short and apologetic reappearance in 1837-1838.<sup>30</sup> Until 1826 translations of classical poetry appeared regularly in the 'Original Poetry' section; usually these were from Horace and Anacreon, but a scene translated from the Medea appeared in 1821. The Monthly Magazine also had a regular review section, but most of the classical reviews were very brief, and apart from a short review of Burgess's Philoctetes there was no interest in editions and translations of Greek tragedy.

What these old-fashioned magazines had in common, to begin with at least, was the encyclopaedic nature of their contents, which included philological articles on classical literature. The Gentleman's Magazine was always the least concerned about keeping in touch with contemporary trends in public interest, which is why it was last to take any notice of public interest in Greek tragedy. After the death of the European Magazine, the Monthly Magazine seems to have over-reacted in its efforts to hold its readers by including longer, lighter, more humorous articles, and by dropping

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29 MM, xxxix (1815), 206-07, 515-16.

30 MM, n.s., xxv (1838), 195-98, is a lengthy apology for the reappearance of such articles.



practically all interest in the classics. This was not so much because the Monthly was hopelessly out of touch with what the reading public wanted, as because magazines were becoming more specialised and aimed for a circulation among only a section of their potential audience of earlier years.

#### D. The New Magazines

Blackwood's Magazine.<sup>31</sup> The older magazines might not have changed at all, had it not been for the appearance of Blackwood's Magazine in 1817, and its various imitators a few years later. When it first appeared in April 1817 as the Edinburgh Monthly Magazine, it was not greatly different in format from other magazines, except that the articles collected in the section of 'Original Correspondence' were a little longer and less dull than one finds in contemporary numbers of, for example, the Gentleman's Magazine. However, William Blackwood became quickly dissatisfied with his first editors, James Pringle and Thomas Cleghorn, and transferred editorial responsibility to John Gibson Lockhart and John Wilson, beginning with the October 1817 issue. Under new editors and with its new name, Blackwood's Magazine rapidly became the best-selling magazine of its time.

One of the most noteworthy things about Blackwood's in its first twenty years is its genuine interest in the literary qualities of classical poetry. In the first six months of the magazine's existence, at a time when any new periodical is anxious to attract readers by including articles likely to interest as many people as possible, there appeared a series of four articles

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31 See Graham, 275-80; Hayden, 60-63; Wellesley Index, I.7-10.

entitled 'Remarks on Greek Tragedy'. Compared with the dull, prejudiced series that had recently appeared in the Monthly Magazine, this series, which was written by Lockhart himself, is all sweetness and light, and introduces a new kind of magazine writing on classical poetry. Lockhart avoided both the tedious recital of antiquarian speculation on the origins of tragedy and simplistic characterisation of the three tragedians. Instead, he selected a representative sample of six plays, offered the minimum of explanation of the conventions (only as much as the unscholarly would need to understand the plays in question), then summarised each play before offering a long scene in translation to let the work in question speak for itself. He was concerned rather to contrast the artistry of the three tragedians than to make value judgements on their moral sentiments or criticise their lack of refinement.

It might be argued by some that these articles on Greek tragedy appeared before the transformation of October 1817, and therefore represented an unsuccessful editorial policy entirely divorced from, and rejected by, what was soon to come. But it should be remembered that it was Lockhart, co-editor from October 1817, who wrote these articles, and it is most unlikely that a writer's opinions on what material is commercially viable can undergo a radical change virtually overnight, except in the most extraordinary circumstances. It is also very interesting that an editorial 'Notice' on the verso of the title-page of the October 1817 number stated that articles in preparation included 'A series of Essays on the Greek Drama, containing New Translations both of the Dialogue and Chorusses' and 'Translations from the Minor Greek Poets'. In the event, articles answering these descriptions did

not appear until the 1830s, but classical literature was not forgotten in the meantime. In autumn 1818 Lockhart and Wilson were in touch with John Murray, who was Blackwood's London agent until 1819, in the hope of obtaining John Hookham Frere's translation of part of Aristophanes.<sup>32</sup> This translation, a long scene from the Frogs, was published in Blackwood's in January 1819, with an enthusiastic introduction by Lockhart.<sup>33</sup> In 1818-1821, apart from Frere's translation, the magazine also published a series of 'Selections from Athenaeus',<sup>34</sup> and translations from Horace,<sup>35</sup> the minor Latin poets<sup>36</sup> and a Homeric hymn.<sup>37</sup>

There was then little interest in classical literature until 1831, with the exception of a very perplexing article in 1828. This article, 'Review of Mordaunt's Εἰρήνη of Aristophanes',<sup>38</sup> was contributed by the dilettante James Christie, although not published under his name.<sup>39</sup> It is perplexing because the book it purports to review (very meticulously cited in a footnote, p. 551, as 'Peace; a comedy, by Aristophanes, freely imitated in English verse. By H. Mordaunt, Esq. M.A. Pp 180. 8<sup>o</sup>. 1827') seems to be as fictitious as its author, although Christie claimed (p. 551) that it was such a popular book that it was already out of print. It

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32 Margo von Romberg, 'Coleridge and John Hookham Frere's Translations of Aristophanes', New Approaches to Coleridge: Biographical and Critical Essays, ed. Donald Sultana, 84-85.

33 Bl, iv (1818-19), 421-29.

34 Bl, iii (1818), 650-53; iv (1818-19), 23-28, 413-17, 666-74.

35 Bl, vii (1820), 292-93, 369-73.

36 Bl, vii (1820), 614-17; viii (1820-21), 59, 311-14, 458-65, 678-82; ix (1821), 192-94, 385-90.

37 Bl, ix (1821), 264-66.

38 Bl, xxiii (1828), 551-61.

39 NLS MS.4021, ff.90, 92.

seems that the article must be an elaborate hoax, taking advantage of contemporary interest in Greek drama, and also in Frere's translation from the Frogs, to which Christie refers with admiration in his opening remarks, even claiming that 'M. Mordaunt' had dedicated his translation to Frere.<sup>40</sup>

In 1831 Wilson, who now had considerable editorial responsibility, began contributing a number of articles on Greek literature to the magazine. The first series of five articles rambled in Wilson's idiosyncratic fashion over and around Sotheby's translation of the Iliad;<sup>41</sup> and in August 1831 he also contributed an article on Greek tragedy which included a comparison of the translations of Agamemnon by Potter and Symmons. A note to readers on the verso of the May 1831 title page exhorted the scholars among them to send in their contributions to a proposed series 'on the Greek Tragedians, Pindar and "the rest"', and the next few volumes of Blackwood's show they were quick to respond. There were several translations from the Homeric Hymns in 1831-32,<sup>42</sup> and a series of articles on Hesiod,<sup>43</sup> drawing generously from Elton's translation which had just been republished in Valpy's Family Classical Library; there were also a translation of Euripides' Cyclops, probably by Wilson,<sup>44</sup> and a parody of Aristophanes, entitled 'The Three Rooks. Scene from the "Birds" of Aristophanes the Younger'.<sup>45</sup> In 1833 Wilson, with some assistance from William Hay,

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40 Bl, xxiii (1828), 551.

41 Bl, xxix (1831), 668-87, 829-66; xxx (1831), 93-125, 847-89; xxxi (1832), 145-80.

42 Bl, xxx (1831), 128-30, 227-29, 669-80; xxxi (1832), 319-27, 742-52; xxxii (1832), 33-34.

43 Bl, xxxii (1832), 165-76, 505-18, 807-23.

44 See Chapter 1, note 22.

45 Bl, xxxii (1832), 669-70.



began a series of articles on the Greek Anthology,<sup>46</sup> beginning with a review of Merivale's new edition of Bland's Collections from the Greek Anthology, and developing into a discursive comparison of various translations. The response of the readers was a deluge of letters congratulating Wilson for publishing these Greek articles and offering the readers' own translations for inclusion in future numbers. Many of these letters were published in a twenty-page 'Appendix' to the series,<sup>47</sup> and many of the translations were published a few months later.<sup>48</sup>

The next few years showed no less enthusiasm for Greek poetry. Wilson wrote two articles on Sotheby's translation of the Odyssey,<sup>49</sup> one on Athenaeus<sup>50</sup> and one on Theocritus;<sup>51</sup> M.J. Chapman submitted a passage translated from the Odyssey and translations from Moschus and Bion;<sup>52</sup> William Hay wrote many more translations from the Greek Anthology;<sup>53</sup> Sir D.K. Sandford contributed a translation of the whole of Aristophanes' Clouds and Plutus, and a passage from the Odyssey;<sup>54</sup> F.T. Price, a reader in Hereford, wrote translations of Callimachus, Musaeus and Homer (including a translation of the pseudo-Homeric Batrachomyomachia).<sup>55</sup> For some

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46 B1, xxxiii (1833), 865-88; xxxiv (1833), 115-40, 258-84, 373-406.

47 B1, xxxiv (1833), 407-28.

48 B1, xxxiv (1833), 961-98.

49 B1, xxxv (1834), 1-26, 153-82.

50 B1, xxxvi (1834), 431-37.

51 B1, xl, (1836), 803-11.

52 B1, xxxv (1834), 714-15; xxxviii (1835), 65-69.

53 B1, xxxvii (1835), 652-56; xxxviii (1835), 142-44, 192-95, 401-04, 642-46; xxxix (1836), 128-30, 404-06, 551-54, 596-600, 793-97; xl (1836), 274-77, 557-60; xli (1837), 238-40, 622-28.

54 B1, xxxviii (1835), 516-46, 763-89; xxxix (1836), 834-35.

55 B1, xl (1836), 467-69; xli (1837), 267-73, 828-34; xlii (1837), 744-46; xliii (1838), 202-07.

strange reason, a second translation of the Batrachomyomachia was published only three months after Price's translation, by an anonymous contributor who also wrote translations of Callimachus and the Homeric Hymns.<sup>56</sup> Embedded within this great and spontaneous outpouring of translations were M.J. Chapman's translations of Prometheus Bound, Eumenides and Alcestis, with the translation of the Eumenides unaccountably being printed twice, in 1837 and 1839.

The general popularity of these translations may be judged from Wilson's boast in 1836 that there was 'not a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly journal in the land that had not, during the last three or four years, been setting in its columns our Greek gems'.<sup>57</sup> In the ten years up to 1840 only one article on Latin poetry appeared in Blackwood's.<sup>58</sup> But all good things must come to an end, and by 1840 interest in Greek poetry was waning fast. In that year, there was only De Quincey's article on 'Theory of Greek Tragedy' and an article on the legal merits of the Iliad,<sup>59</sup> and in the next few years there was nothing. Chapman had sent in translations of the Medea and Antigone, and promised several others if there was a demand for them, but the former were never published and the latter never written.<sup>60</sup> When Elizabeth Barrett Browning submitted her revised version of Prometheus Bound to Blackwood in 1845, he returned it, saying that it was not suitable

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56 Bl, xlii (1837), 360-65; xliii (1838), 396-400, 631-35; xliv (1838), 52-56.

57 Bl, xl (1836), 803.

58 Bl, xliii (1838), 521-64.

59 Bl, xlviii (1840), 355-58.

60 See further in Chapter 10.



for publication in the magazine.<sup>61</sup>

The New Monthly Magazine.<sup>62</sup> In the 1820s Campbell's 'Lectures on Poetry' were the only classical articles in the New Monthly Magazine, except for one or two translations from Horace and Anacreon,<sup>63</sup> three articles on Plato's Republic<sup>64</sup> and a poem entitled 'The Sacrifice of Iphigeneia', inspired by a passage in the Agamemnon.<sup>65</sup>

Campbell's 'Lectures' have already been mentioned (pp. 111-14), but the lectures on Greek tragedy require closer examination. For the unlearned reader, they are more daunting than their equivalents in Blackwood's or the London Magazine, and less fully illustrated by quotation (when Campbell quotes, he uses existing translations rather than his own), but not so dogmatic and unliterary as the earlier series in the Monthly. In view of Campbell's friendship with Schlegel, it is not surprising to see a general Schlegelian influence in his approach to the subject: both men were concerned to stress the importance of interpreting Greek tragedy against its proper historical and cultural background, and both men sought to reject the traditional moralistic interpretation of Greek tragedy in favour of an interpretation based on the study of character and motivation. But Campbell had enough native ability to follow his own path within these general guidelines. In Lecture X he began with an outline of the early development of

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61 Gardner B. Taplin, The life of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 230-33.

62 See Graham, 284-86; Hayden, 59-60; Wellesley Index, III.161-72.

63 NMM, ii (1821), 16, 55; iv (1822), 300.

64 NMM, iv (1822), 512-17; v (1822), 69-76, 152-57.

65 NMM, x (1824), 451-52.

drama, then attempted to account for the peculiarities of Greek drama in its mature form, and described the preparation of a play for production and the physical appearance of the Greek theatre.<sup>66</sup> Schlegel, on the other hand, had passed over pre-Aeschylean tragedy in one paragraph,<sup>67</sup> and had practically nothing to say of the social and cultural background of drama at Athens in his description of the Greek theatre, masks and costumes.<sup>68</sup> If one compares the remarks of both men on the importance of judging Greek tragedy with an unbiassed mind, it is clear that Campbell alone stressed the importance of possessing a sound knowledge of Athenian society as well as an open mind. Compare Schlegel:

No man can be a true critic or connoisseur who does not possess a universality of mind, who does not possess the flexibility, which, throwing aside all personal predilections and blind habits, enables him to transport himself into the peculiarities of other ages and nations, to feel them as it were from their proper central point.<sup>69</sup>

with Campbell:

In judging of the subjects of their drama, it particularly behoves us to appreciate them not merely by their intrinsic terror and pathos, but also by the accessory interest which local and religious prejudices threw around them in the fancy of a Greek.<sup>70</sup>

Moreover, Campbell's remarks on tragedy are remarkably sensible and sympathetic, and he declined to join Schlegel in the latter's tendency to devalue Sophocles by comparison with Aeschylus, and his attacks on Euripides.

In fact, the main contrast between Schlegel and Campbell is at

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66 NMM, xvi (1826), 1-10.

67 Lectures, I.91.

68 Lectures, I.52-68.

69 Lectures, I.3-4.

70 NMM, xvi (1826), 528.

all times the contrast between the Teutonic search for symbolism and wish to interpret according to pre-arranged rules on the one hand, and the British preference for a pragmatic solution which interprets, as it were, from within. For example, Schlegel interprets the trial-scene in the Eumenides as symbolic of the conflict between reason and instinct within every man, and the finding of a sanctuary for the Furies within the state as implying that irrational behaviour is always a latent danger;<sup>71</sup> but Campbell sees this scene as a purely political move by Aeschylus, and the more reprehensible because it flatters the aristocratic Areopagus Council, rather than the democracy.<sup>72</sup> The most significant result of this difference of approach is that Schlegel tends to use Aeschylus as a yardstick against which he measures the other two tragedians, whereas Campbell chooses to judge each on his own merits.

After the conclusion of Campbell's 'Lectures' in 1826, Greek literature played little part in the make-up of the magazine, apart from the review section. There were reviews of Palin's Persians, Harford's Agamemnon, Medwin's Prometheus Bound and Agamemnon, and Anstice's Selections, as well as the reprints of old translations in Valpy's Family Classical Library and Murray's Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets. In 1832 there also appeared an article by R.A. Willmott entitled 'The Spirit of the Greek Dramatic Poets. The Agamemnon of Aeschylus', which began with a general introduction to Greek literature (apparently drawn

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71 Lectures, I.106.

72 NMM, xvi (1826), 242. But compare Schlegel, Lectures, I.126, claiming that the aim of the Eumenides was 'to confer glory on Athens as the sacred abode of law and humanity'.

from F. Schlegel's lectures on the subject, which had been published in an English translation by J.G. Lockhart in 1818), extolled the value of Greek literature as a haven from the 'ignorance and commerce' of the present day, and then went on to discuss the relative merits of all translations, both prose and verse, of the Agamemnon published prior to 1832. After 1837 the New Monthly Magazine showed no interest in the classics.

The London Magazine.<sup>73</sup> From its inception in 1820, the London Magazine was particularly interested in classical Greece, showing even more enthusiasm for the currently fashionable Romantic Hellenism than Blackwood's or the New Monthly Magazine.<sup>74</sup> Taylor, who took over as editor from Scott in 1821, apparently planned to buy translations of Greek drama and of Greek and Latin lyric poetry,<sup>75</sup> and the outcome of this editorial policy can clearly be seen from 1821 to 1823, when scarcely a month passed without at least one classical article or translation, with the lion's share going to Greek literature. In the following six years only three classical articles — all on Greek poetry — appeared. The editor of the London Magazine after 1824 was Henry Southern, whose utilitarian policies found very little place for Greek literature.

The vast majority of these classical articles was written by, C.A. Elton, who had already published translations from Greek and

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73 See Graham, 280-83; Hayden, 63-65; Josephine Bauer, 'The London Magazine, 1820-29', Anglistica, i. There is also an Index to the London Magazine by Frank P. Riga and Claude A. France.

74 See Bauer, 277-85.

75 Tim Chilcott, A Publisher and his Circle: the Life and Work of John Taylor, Keats's Publisher, 141.

Latin poetry.<sup>76</sup> Under the noms-de-plume of 'an Idler' and 'Vida' he contributed articles, including translations, on the Batrachomyomachia, the Homeric Hymns, Catullus, Propertius, Nonnus and Quintus Calaber,<sup>77</sup> as well as the Greek tragedians. The series on Greek tragedy allots one article to translation from each dramatist, and is prefaced by a general article 'On the Tragic Drama of the Greeks'. Elton is, for a Greek scholar, surprisingly contemptuous of the conventions of Greek drama: 'We need scarcely regret, that we can no longer hear the remonstrances of Electra howled through the orifice of a yawning mask, or see the actor of Agamemnon clamber on buskins, that we may wonder at the tallness of an old hero.'<sup>78</sup> He is also inclined to belittle Sophocles, finding his choral odes irrelevant to the action of the drama, and reserves most of his admiration for Euripides' realism, imagery and talent for tugging at the heartstrings.<sup>79</sup> The 'Romantic' nature of Elton's interest in Greek tragedy is clear from the three illustrative passages he chooses to translate: from Aeschylus, the character of Clytemnestra (the Greek Lady Macbeth) and the frenzied prophecies of Cassandra in Agamemnon; from Sophocles, the characterisation of Electra from the recognition-scene to the death of Aegisthus in Electra; and Euripides' pathos-filled portrayal of Orestes in the grip of madness in Orestes. A supplementary article, translating a scene from Medea, was

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76 For Elton and his translations, see Chapter 9.

77 LM, iv (1821), 269-73, 388-93, 481-84, 639-43; v (1822), 161-63, 340-49, 536-39; vi (1822), 125-32, 209-12, 336-40, 440-44, 508-12; vii (1823), 63-68, 199-204.

78 LM, vii (1823), 628.

79 LM, vii (1823), 631-32.



probably not by Elton.<sup>80</sup>

In 1824 the London Magazine included a most unusual article, 'Richard the Third, after the Manner of the Ancients', in which the writer described a 'reverie' wherein he saw the three Greek tragedians agree to compete in each producing their own drama based on Shakespeare's Richard the Third. He then gave an account of the three plays they composed, comparing each in turn with the other tragedies the three had written. As one might expect, Euripides' play is full of rhetoric, misogyny and variety of incident; Sophocles' play has a simple plot depending on the operation of 'hybris', and dignified characters; while Aeschylus' play is typified by high-flown language, spectacle, chorus participation and the working-out of curses. It is a very clever and remarkably successful idea, which obviously depends heavily for its success on the existence of knowledgeable readers who could appreciate the skill of the imitations, and who would be familiar with the parallel passages in the Greek plays to which the writer alludes.

The last classical article appeared in May 1829, and is again on Greek tragedy. Entitled 'The Dramas of Euripides: the Hecuba', and written by R.A. Willmott, it is a piece of such vapid and effusive nonsense that one wonders why it was ever published at all, even in desperation. Aeschylus, we learn, 'rolled the stone from the tomb of poetry, and the radiant phantom walked forth over

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80 For the authorship of this translation, see Chapter 9, notes 47 and 49.

the earth'.<sup>81</sup> Then Sophocles 'broke forth from the gloom of his rival like a lark in the misty dawn',<sup>82</sup> followed by Euripides, who is apparently to be praised for the qualities of 'inanity' and 'indistinctness'.<sup>83</sup> Willmott crowned his article with a few translations from the Hecuba. The extinction of the London Magazine a month later prevented the appearance of a sequel, although Willmott was soon writing for Fraser's Magazine.

Fraser's Magazine.<sup>84</sup> From its foundation in 1830 Fraser's consciously sought to rival Blackwood's in popularity and prestige. This rivalry can even be seen in the interest shown in Greek poetry in the 1830s (like Blackwood's, Fraser's showed very little interest in Latin literature). In June and August 1830, Willmott contributed two rambling articles on Meleager and Simonides, with translations.<sup>85</sup> Then in November 1832 Fraser's began to publish Thomas Medwin's full-length translations of Aeschylus, beginning with the Choephoroe, and continuing in January and April 1833 with

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81 LM, xxiii (1829), 470. There is a curious similarity between Willmott's words and the end of one of Shelley's sonnets:

. . . graves, from which a glorious Phantom may  
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.  
(*'Sonnet: England in 1819'*, The Poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, 570) The sonnet was apparently not published until 1839, but may possibly have circulated in manuscript before this time. In 1829 Shelley was still generally unpopular, but was beginning to attract a following among Cambridge students (see Sylva Norman, Flight of the Skylark, 87-89), and although Willmott was not yet at Cambridge (see Chapter 9, note 110) he may have had contact with the Shelley enthusiasts.

82 LM, xxiii (1829), 470.

83 LM, xxiii (1829), 472.

84 See Graham, 290-91; Wellesley Index, II.303-19. The only full-length study of Fraser's Magazine, Miriam M.H. Thrall, Rebellious Fraser's, has little to say about the classical articles.

85 FM, i (1830), 608-09; ii (1830), 53-58.

the Persians and Seven before Thebes respectively, and in May 1834 the Eumenides. Fraser's showed no other interest in Greek poetry in these first years; but in 1835 there was a sudden change, perhaps in response to the articles in Blackwood's and Wilson's announcement in April 1835 that he had plans to publish articles and translations on Theocritus, Homer and Aristophanes.<sup>86</sup> In May 1835 Fraser's published a translation of a scene from Iliad V,<sup>87</sup> and in the following month there was an article, possibly by Maginn, on the Elegies of Tyrtaeus.<sup>88</sup> This was followed by a series on the Greek pastoral poets, written by Willmott, who also reviewed Chapman's translation of Greek pastoral poetry.<sup>89</sup> In 1836 Francis Mahony contributed a series of humorous articles called 'The Songs of Horace',<sup>90</sup> which included translations and imitations; and there was also an anonymous parody of Aristophanes called 'The Possums of Aristophanes. Newly Discovered'.<sup>91</sup> Willmott also wrote a series of five articles on Aristophanes, which appeared occasionally from 1837 to 1839;<sup>92</sup> while in 1838 Maginn began a long series entitled 'Homeric Ballads', which had reached its thirteenth article in October 1840, and which consisted of translations of passages of Homer into ballad stanza, often with the Greek text in parallel.<sup>93</sup> In 1839-1840 Maginn also

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86 Bl, xxxvii (1835), 656.

87 FM, xi (1835), 582-85.

88 FM, xi (1835), 621-29.

89 FM, xii (1835), 222-41, 394-408, 541-50; xiii (1836), 92-104, 600-607.

90 FM, xiv (1836), 87-103, 203-17, 360-72, 484-99, 641-56.

91 FM, xiv (1836), 286-97. See also note 45 above.

92 FM, xv (1837), 285-304; xviii (1838), 127-39, 317-29; xix (1839), 639-52; xx (1839), 379-88.

93 The first of these appeared in FM, xvii (1838), 1-5.

wrote a series of translations from Lucian.<sup>94</sup> There was even enough interest in all Greek poetry at this time for Fraser's to reprint Medwin's translations of Prometheus (August 1837) and Agamemnon (November 1838). But by 1840 Fraser's, like Blackwood's, had decided that this particular goose had exhausted its supply of golden eggs, and should be allowed to rest in peace.

The Metropolitan.<sup>95</sup> The Metropolitan was founded in 1830, and in its early years was co-edited by Thomas Campbell and Cyrus Redding.<sup>96</sup> As with other contemporary magazines, there was little interest in Latin literature. In the years 1831-1840 twenty translations of Greek poetry were published, mostly of poems from the Greek Anthology.<sup>97</sup> Its review section included reviews of Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles, Medwin's Agamemnon and Prometheus Bound, and Anstice's Selections. There were only five articles on classical literature, and of these only one (in February 1836) was on Greek poetry. Almost inevitably, it is entitled 'Beauties of the Grecian Drama'. Its anonymous author's main purpose was to give the non-classical reader some idea of the 'sublimity and pathos' of Greek tragedy by offering a few passages in translation. Selected passages, he believed, were more likely to give the unlearned reader a favourable impression

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94 FM, xix (1839), 89-95, 215-21, 470-76, 630-37, 732-37; xx (1839), 300-09; xxi (1840), 32.

95 See Graham, 289. The most useful sources for the early days of the Metropolitan are Redding, Fifty Years' Recollections, III.23-26; Redding, Literary Reminiscences, II.281-87; and Beattie, III.99-105.

96 Redding, Fifty Years' Recollections, III.1-3; Redding, Literary Reminiscences, II.281, 287.

97 See, for example, Met, xii (1835), 56, 200, 214; xii (1835), 413, 437. These translations are usually used as spacefillers.

of Greek drama than a complete translation.

The Penny Magazine.<sup>98</sup> The Penny Magazine, which began in 1832, differed from the magazines so far examined, in that its purpose was to provide both amusement and instruction for the working classes. The element of instruction occasionally included classical literature, but apart from two passages of a prose translation of the Iliad in 1832,<sup>99</sup> and a series of articles on five famous classical figures (all but Cicero were Greeks) in 1838-1839,<sup>100</sup> all of the classical articles were devoted to Greek tragedy. In January 1833 there were two short articles on Aeschylus: the first outlined the plot of the Prometheus and quoted two passages in a prose translation to illustrate the character of Prometheus; while the second explained the convention of the messenger-speech, outlined the plot of the Persae and gave a prose translation of that play's messenger-speech. The Penny Magazine seems to have preferred prose translations because they gave a more accurate idea of the original.<sup>101</sup>

The next classical article, 'Ruins of a Greek Theatre at Syracuse, With an Account of the Ancient Greek Drama', appeared on 23 July 1836. Wood-cut illustrations were a regular feature of the Penny Magazine, and on this occasion the illustration was used as a starting-point for a more general article, which outlined the origins of Greek tragedy, gave brief biographies of the three

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98 The best account is in Passages, II.180-94. See also Graham, 296n.

99 PM, i (1832), 241-42, 306-07.

100 PM, vii (1838), 133-35, 141-43, 261-64, 365-67, 374-76, 445-47, 453-55; viii (1839), 85-87.

101 See the prefatory remarks to the second translation from the Iliad, PM, i (1832), 306.



tragedians and Aristophanes, described the various theatrical conventions and the social importance of drama at Athens, and ended with a quotation from The Travels of Anacharsis of a passage in which Anacharsis describes the scene in a Greek theatre as the audience waits for a performance of the Antigone to begin. One interesting point about this article is that the writer actually thought fit to quote the Greek words τράγος and ᾠδή in his footnote on the etymology of the word 'tragedy'; one wonders how many of his readers had enough Greek to benefit from his erudition. The last series of articles on Greek tragedy appeared in May and June 1839. The first article was well illustrated with drawings and diagrams, and was the usual sort of introductory article on the Greek theatre and its conventions. This was followed by one article on each of the three tragedians, with the usual biographies and some account of their plays, followed by a list of available translations. The writer acknowledged his debt to Schlegel, and to The Theatre of the Greeks, which was by that time a standard university text-book,<sup>102</sup> and ended each of his three articles on the tragedians with a long quotation from Schlegel's assessment of their work.

The 'modern' magazines, designed (with the exception of the Penny Magazine) to appeal to a wide audience drawn from the more prosperous classes, were deliberately 'popular' in approach, publishing articles that took advantage of the considerable contemporary interest in literature and the arts in general.

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102 John William Donaldson, The Theatre of the Greeks, a Series of Papers Relating to the History and Criticism of the Greek Drama, fourth edition, 1836. The first three editions were the work of Philip Wentworth Buckham.

Chilcott remarks on the great diversity of interests of the new reading public, which 'cut across traditional barriers of class and culture'.<sup>103</sup> This must be the reason why, despite the pressures forcing periodicals to aim themselves at a more restricted audience, all of the magazines surveyed, from Blackwood's to the Penny Magazine, thought it worth their while to include articles on Greek tragedy. Such articles would at best be good for circulation, and at worst do them no harm.

#### E. Literary Weeklies

This new interest in literature of all kinds also made possible the appearance of a new sort of publication, represented here by the Literary Gazette and the Athenaeum. These were weekly papers, mostly given over to reviews, but also including general articles on literature and the fine arts, some poetry and a few pages of advertisements of meetings, new books and the like.

The Literary Gazette.<sup>104</sup> The Literary Gazette, begun in 1817, seems to have been intended for a fairly middlebrow readership, and had only a luke-warm interest in classical literature. The coverage given to Greek tragedy is greater after 1830. Only one edition of Greek tragedy was reviewed: there was a short paragraph on Burges's Philoctetes in 1833. The translations reviewed were Medwin's Prometheus Bound and Agamemnon, Harford's Agamemnon, Anstice's Selections and the adaptation of Potter's Aeschylus in Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets. The Literary Gazette also regularly contained short notices of the

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103 Chilcott, 201.

104 See Graham, 315-16; Hayden, 70-72.

translations in Valpy's Family Classical Library, reminding readers of the great value of such a collection, but these notices have only been included in Figure 3 (p. 120) if they offer some kind of critical judgement. Generally speaking, the classical reviews in the Literary Gazette are uninformed and uninformative, and often seem to have been included for the sake of appearances, or even simply as spacefillers. The review of Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets, for instance, only outlines the book's contents, while the review of Medwin's Prometheus Bound does little more than echo Schlegel's statement of the need to see Greek tragedy against the proper historical and cultural background. Anstice's Selections was reviewed in a leading article, but the reviewer's main purpose seems to have been to complain about the lowly status enjoyed by translators.

The Athenaeum.<sup>105</sup> The main rival of the Literary Gazette was the Athenaeum, which began life in 1828. The Athenaeum found more room in its columns for the classics than the Literary Gazette, often reviewing such books at greater length and offering more than the usual platitudes, although it is only fair to point out that many of the classical reviews in both papers are short notices of school editions which make no attempt at formal criticism. Several editions of Greek tragedy are briefly reviewed: Brasse's Oedipus Coloneus, Major's Orestes, Burges's Philoctetes, Griffiths' Prometheus Vincetus and Septem contra Thebas. But considerably more space is given to the reviews of translation, which the Athenaeum seems to have regarded as a subject of special

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105 See Graham, 317-18; Leslie A. Marchand, The Athenaeum: a Mirror of Victorian Culture.

interest, regularly repeating the conviction that prose translations of verse are more satisfactory, because it is easier for such translations to give a true idea of the original poet's style.<sup>106</sup> All translations of Greek tragedy after 1828, however insignificant, were reviewed, and Valpy's Family Classical Library also received regular attention, although (as in the Literary Gazette) only the first few reviews were of any great length. As well as reviews, the Athenaeum sometimes found space for translations, usually of poems from the Greek Anthology which were short enough to fill out the odd corner, but translations from Aristophanes also appeared in 1829.<sup>107</sup> In addition, there was an article on the Agamemnon in May 1832, in which Aeschylus was compared with Shakespeare, and passages from Medwin's translation were used to illustrate the characterisation of Clytemnestra and Cassandra.<sup>108</sup>

#### F. The Specialist Magazines

The remaining two periodicals are two of the three specialist classical magazines of the early nineteenth century. Parry believed the Museum Criticum to be better than the Classical Journal (which he described as 'a ponderously uninformed publication that Barker [its editor] often filled with encyclopedic ignorance') because the best classicists of the day wrote for it,<sup>109</sup> but the Classical Journal has been chosen for the survey

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106 See, for example, Ath, ii (1829), 801-02, 811-12.

107 For the translation from Aristophanes, see Ath, ii (1829), 489, 518-19. For other translations, see, for example, Ath, v (1832), 243, 602, 685, 699.

108 This article was probably by Thomas Medwin. See Chapter 10, pp. 360-61 below.

109 Parry, 48.

because it lasted a little longer (1810-1829) than the Museum Criticum (1813-1826). The third classical periodical, the Philological Museum, only lasted for two years (1832-1833), but it has been included because these were years of particular interest in Greek tragedy in the non-specialist magazines. In making the survey, no special note has been made of reviews of editions of Greek tragedy in the classical magazines, since there is no particular significance in the inclusion of such reviews in specialist periodicals.

The Classical Journal. As Parry says, the Classical Journal is arid and practically unreadable. Most of the articles do nothing but rake over mountains of textual criticism, hoping for nuggets but producing only dross. Greek tragedy comes in for its due share of attention, all of it eminently forgettable. Although the 'Advertisement' in the first volume called for 'Disquisitions on Classical and Literary Subjects' to be submitted for inclusion in future numbers,<sup>110</sup> few articles ever went beyond the everlasting preoccupation with ingenious emendations and reinterpretations of difficult words and phrases. In 1812 John Galt contributed a letter headed 'History of Translations', in which he suggested that such a history of translation from the classics into English would be particularly interesting because of what it would say about changing tastes in literary style.<sup>111</sup> His suggestion that other readers might care to write in to the Classical Journal about this seems to have been ignored. The apparently promising article 'Translations of Euripides' in the

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110 CJ, i (1810), v.

111 CJ, vi (1812), 201-02.



June 1815 number turns out to be a Latin translation from the Hecuba written for a university scholarship examination.<sup>112</sup> In 1816 the Classical Journal published the whole of Lord Royston's translation of Lycophron, with notes;<sup>113</sup> and in 1817 an eight-line translation of a 'scolium' was embedded in an article on the poet Timocreon;<sup>114</sup> but there was no other interest in translation before 1820, when a review of Charles Symmons's translation of the Aeneid appeared.<sup>115</sup> Between 1820 and 1825 six translations of poetry were reviewed, three of them translations from Greek, including John Symmons's Agamemnon and Shelley's Cyclops. The review of Symmons's Agamemnon is in fact one of the most readable articles in the whole lifespan of the Classical Journal, for instead of repeating the usual clichés about the theory of translation, the author discusses the reasons why Greek tragedy has not attracted a Pope or even a Cowper to translate it, even at the present time when there were better texts available and public interest in the subject was so high.<sup>116</sup>

There were also a few articles on the general subject of Greek tragedy. The two articles on the 'philosophical sentiments' of Aeschylus and Euripides in 1815 and 1816 are merely a collection of quotations and not worth a second glance.<sup>117</sup> In 1820 an article 'On the Origin of Drama' looked at drama as developing from

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112 CJ, xi (1815), 227-28.

113 CJ, xiii (1816), 1-32; xiv (1816), 1-55.

114 CJ, xv (1817), 313-15.

115 CJ, xxi (1820), 286-92.

116 See especially CJ, xxxi (1825), 101-02.

117 CJ, xi (1815), 207-20; CJ, xiv (1816), 112-25. These have not been included in Appendix 5.

religious festivals in several countries including Greece.<sup>118</sup> In 1826 the Classical Journal thought fit to reprint two extracts from Campbell's articles in the New Monthly Magazine, the first being his 'general remarks' on Greek drama, and the second being his first article on Sophocles.<sup>119</sup> Why such general articles were published in a specialised magazine, or why Sophocles should be left hanging in mid-air, must remain a mystery. In 1828 there were three articles entitled 'Athenian Elegance Delineated; or, a Critical Inquiry into the Principles and Laws of the Grecian Tragic Poetry', which turn out to be a manual on Greek prosody.<sup>120</sup> Apart from the reprint of Campbell's two articles, absolutely no interest is shown in Greek tragedy as literature.

The Philological Museum. According to the editorial preface in the first number, the Philological Museum was started in order to publish the philological articles that had once been the mainstay of the now defunct Classical Journal and Museum Criticum.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, complains the editor, the principal Reviews of the day, which had once included discussions of classical philology, have stopped doing so, and if now they ever reviewed classical books, they usually discussed them as literature, 'for it is only by such a mode of treatment that they can hope to interest the great body of their readers'. A writer in the Monthly Magazine in 1838 was to make a similar complaint.<sup>122</sup>

There were certainly not enough philologists to support the

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118 CJ, xxi (1820), 230-38. Not included in Appendix 5.

119 CJ, xxxiii (1826), 73-86; xxxiv (1826), 185-200. Compare NMM, xvi (1826), 1-10, 521-32.

120 CJ, xxxvii (1828), 21-30, 208-21; xxxviii (1828), 40-58.

121 PhM, i (1832), i-iv.

122 MM, n.s., xxv (1838), 195.

Philological Museum beyond its first two years. Its two volumes contain 87 articles, of which only 6 are concerned with Greek tragedy. Three discuss points of textual criticism, one is a review and one discusses the number of plays ascribed to Sophocles. The sixth, which is the only one to consider Greek tragedy as literature, is Thirlwall's influential article on dramatic irony in Sophocles, which makes the point that an understanding of the operation of dramatic irony is essential to the literary appreciation of Sophocles' plays.<sup>123</sup> Since the Philological Museum carried different kinds of articles in much the same proportions as had the Classical Journal, there is no reason to think that editorial policy would have altered in any way if the Philological Museum had survived.

From the completed survey it is clear that, except for a few years at the beginning of the century, there is very little interest in Latin literature; that the interest in Greek literature is mainly an interest in Greek poetry, and that tragedy is more popular than other kinds of poetry after 1810. Reviews of editions of Greek tragedy, at first entirely scholarly, show some awareness of general interest by including a small proportion of remarks on the literary merits of the plays concerned. The earlier translations of tragedy are not often reviewed, but after 1830 almost any and every translation seems to receive some attention, except from the two greatest Reviews of the time. Articles on tragedy appear sooner or later in every magazine, with the first in 1815; and it is the new magazines which show most interest in

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123 See Appendix 5. The article was reprinted in Remains, Literary and Theological, of Bishop Thirlwall, ed. J.J. Stewart Perowne, III.1-57.

the literary merits of Greek tragedy, and awareness of the existence of a readership interested in learning about Greek drama because some knowledge of the subject was regarded as necessary for any person claiming to be properly educated. At first, article-writers are content to do no more than include a few translated passages in their articles by way of illustration; but after 1830 the two most outstanding literary magazines go much farther. The suggestion that translations of entire Greek plays were published to fill an odd corner in a barren month cannot be entertained, particularly when one remembers the readers' response to the Greek articles in Blackwood's. The most likely explanation seems to be that this was the culmination of a chain of events over many years, and the following chapter will attempt to trace the line of that chain.

## CHAPTER 6. THE LINKS IN THE CHAIN

Thus we come back simply to this, that literary taste, like every other human faculty, is the creature of the age, circumscribed by its limitations, stirred by its passions, warped by its defects. It cannot be taken in isolation from the man as a whole.

E.E. Kellest, The Whirligig of Taste, 27.

It is now possible to see the early nineteenth-century translations of Greek tragedy in their proper perspective. At all times one must remember that new ideas and trends in literature (or, for that matter, the arts in general) can take a long time to penetrate the consciousness of even the better informed and better educated sections of society. Depending on circumstances, and the momentum behind each new movement, penetration can take years, even decades, and this seems to be what has happened with Greek tragedy in translation.

Chapter 4 has already traced the growth of interest in ancient Greece from its mid-eighteenth-century origins into a specific interest in Greek drama in the second decade of the nineteenth century and beyond. The last twenty years or so of this particular link in the chain of events coincided with the emergence of Romanticism in English poetry. However, the earlier Romantics were inclined to identify Hellenism with neoclassicism, and to reject both as irrelevant to the modern condition. It was left to the younger generation of Romantic poets to realise the



value and continuing relevance of Greek literature.<sup>1</sup> Pierce, for example, has shown that after about 1812 there is a distinct increase in Greek themes in Romantic poetry, although he has failed to point out the importance of Greek tragedy in this respect.<sup>2</sup> Shelley disapproved of the modern theatre, and Byron was inclined to disdain it, but even so they seemed to believe, as Keats did, that the writing of drama was the culminating achievement of the poet. Keats died before realising his ambition,<sup>3</sup> but Shelley and Byron wrote several plays. Although they were writing mainly with Shakespeare and his contemporary dramatists as their models, they were surely not unmindful of Greek drama. Medwin mentioned 'the Ancient Tragedy' as one of the prime influences on Shelley,<sup>4</sup> whose Prometheus Unbound and Hellas are modelled on two plays of Aeschylus.<sup>5</sup> Byron had attempted a translation from Prometheus at school<sup>6</sup> and his schoolboy enthusiasm for the play was later revived by hearing Shelley's spontaneous translation when they were together in Switzerland.<sup>7</sup> When he wrote Manfred, as he told John Murray in 1817, he was not exactly

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1 See Levin, 18-25.

2 Pierce, 'Hellenic Current', 104-05; Currents and Eddies, 246.

3 Of his dramatic ambitions, Keats wrote, 'One of my Ambitions is to make as great a revolution in modern dramatic writing as Kean has done in acting.' (The Letters of John Keats, ed. Hyder Edward Rollins, II.139)

4 Medwin, Life of Shelley, 419.

5 See Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.357; Medwin, Life of Shelley, 353.

6 For Byron's schoolboy translations, see Chapter 8 below, pp. 226-28.

7 See Chapter 2, note 12.

using Prometheus as a model, but he was prepared to admit 'its influence over all or anything that I have written'.<sup>8</sup> Byron's plays were not the overnight success that his narrative poems had been,<sup>9</sup> and Shelley's reputation grew but slowly, so that it was not really until after both had died that public interest in their plays was sufficient to push the general reader farther towards Greek drama.

In Chapters 2 and 3 it was shown that some acquaintance with Greek drama was regarded as indispensable for the well-educated man. William Palin, in the introduction to his translation of the Persae, wrote:

Of all the higher authors introduced by the superior intellectual character of the age, the most esteemed appear to be the Greek dramatists; and those capable of appreciating their beauties will not wonder at this. The numberless editions of them which have appeared within the last twenty years, prove them to be extensively popular.<sup>10</sup>

But this popularity never really brought Greek drama out of the study and on to the stage. The eighteenth-century notion that the 'barrenness of invention in the choice of subjects' in Greek drama would not appeal to a modern audience thirsting for novelty was still current,<sup>11</sup> and it was common for people in the early nineteenth century to think that they had reached the highest peak of culture and taste, and that anything written in a different convention was inferior.<sup>12</sup> There was some correspondence in the

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8 Byron's Letters and Journals, V.268. See also Jerome J. McGann, Fiery Dust: Byron's Poetic Development, 206-07.

9 Byron's Letters and Journals, VIII.218; IX.161.

10 Palin, xi.

11 Vicesimus Knox, Essays Moral and Literary (new edition, 1826), III.279.

12 See Parry, 61.

European Magazine on the matter in 1819. One writer suggested that at Westminster School, instead of the traditional annual performance of Terence, some Greek drama might be performed.<sup>13</sup> This prompted a reply from another reader who thought that such a performance of Greek drama would be the worst possible thing, because a performance on the modern stage would only make these great literary works look ridiculous.<sup>14</sup> In 1822 another writer in the same magazine explained that Greek tragedy would be unacceptable in a modern theatre because of the vastly different theatrical conventions, the choice of mythological subjects, the portrayal of gods behaving irrationally, and the lack of optimism or any kind of a moral.<sup>15</sup> William Taylor also imputed contemporary reactions to the ancient Athenians when he asserted that they must have laughed at the frenzied Io in Prometheus and the lamentations of Xerxes and the Chorus in Persae.<sup>16</sup> One of the few prepared to take a more enlightened view was Thomas Lovell Beddoes, who suggested to his friend T.F. Kelsall in 1831 that it might be an 'interesting experiment' to put on an adapted Greek tetralogy complete with masks, although he accepted the unsuitability of Greek dramatic conventions for modern plays.<sup>17</sup>

It was for similar reasons that John Smith undertook his own version of the cycle of legends surrounding Argos and Thebes in

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13 EM, lxxvi (1819), 133-34.

14 EM, lxxvi (1819), 211-12.

15 EM, lxxxii (1822), 402-03.

16 MR, lxxxi (1816), 116.

17 Works of T.L. Beddoes, 653. It is only within the last fifty years that audiences have come to accept alien conventions on the stage. See Harley Granville-Barker, 'On Translating Greek Tragedy', Essays in Honour of Gilbert Murray, 239-42.

The House of Atreus and the House of Laius, published in 1819.<sup>18</sup>

He explains in his two prefaces that he has decided to abridge and adapt some extant Greek tragedies, making them into two three- or four-act plays, composed in a way more acceptable to readers of his own time, and suggests that 'those whose curiosity may tempt them to dive deeper into the subject' should read one of the 'regular translations'.<sup>19</sup> For his first play, The House of Atreus, he used Agamemnon for Act 1, the Choephoroe and the Electra plays of Sophocles and Euripides for Act 2, and Iphigeneia in Tauris for Act 3. For The House of Laius, the plays adapted were Oedipus Tyrannus for Act 1, Oedipus Coloneus for Act 2, Septem contra Thebas and Phoenissae for Act 3, and Antigone for Act 4. His method was to adhere fairly closely to the plot of whichever play he was using, often omitting scenes which he found unsuitable, and freely imitating the Greek text rather than translating. All passages taken directly from the original have been 'scrupulously marked'.<sup>20</sup> By lumping three diverse dramatists together in his disjointed plays, he can have done nothing to promote a proper appreciation of Greek tragedy.

The frequently expressed conviction that Greek tragedy would be laughed off the modern stage makes the success of Dr Valpy's Greek productions at Reading School all the more surprising. Dr Richard Valpy (1754-1836) was headmaster of Reading School from 1781 to 1830, during which time he raised the school from abject

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18 John Smith, The House of Atreus and the House of Laius; Tragedies Founded on the Greek Drama. See also Chapter 9, pp. 279-84.

19 Smith, House of Atreus, xxxii-xxxiii; House of Laius, xix.

20 Smith, House of Laius, xx.



mediocrity to its highest standard ever.<sup>21</sup> It was partly because of his wish to improve his students' understanding of Greek that he had begun, apparently in 1806, to include a performance of a Greek play in the triennial entertainment provided for the School Visitors.<sup>22</sup> The plays were performed in Greek,<sup>23</sup> but on at least five occasions translations of the plays concerned were published at Reading after the plays had been performed, with the profits from the sale of the translations going to local charities.<sup>24</sup> From the advertisements and reviews of the plays in the Reading Mercury, it is possible to reconstruct almost completely a list of the plays put on by Dr Valpy for the years 1806 to 1827 inclusive:

1806	<u>Oedipus Tyrannus</u>	Translation in British Library Review, <u>Reading Mercury</u> , 20 Oct 1806
1809	<u>Alcestis</u>	Translation in British Library Review, <u>Reading Mercury</u> , 23 Oct 1809
1812	?No performance	
1815	?No performance	
1818	<u>Hercules Furens</u>	Review, <u>Reading Mercury</u> , 26 Oct 1818
1821	<u>Orestes</u>	Translation in Reading Library Review, <u>Reading Mercury</u> , 22 Oct 1821

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21 DNB. See also L'Estrange, II.36.

22 It seems that before this time only Latin comedies in translation were performed. See Charles Coates, The History and Antiquities of Reading, 320-21.

23 This was certainly so in 1809, 1821, 1824 and 1827. See RM, 23 October 1809, 18 October 1824; Letters of M.R. Mitford, ed. Chorley, I.116; M.R. Mitford, Belford Regis, I.308, 315. W.S. Darter, Reminiscences of Reading, by an Octogenarian, 113, claimed that the Greek play was performed in translation, but in view of his vague and seemingly imprecise memory of the play performed, his recollection is less reliable than that of Miss Mitford (written nearer the actual event) and the two newspaper reports.

24 See DNB, s.v. 'Richard Valpy'. Four of the translations are extant (see reconstructed list above, and Appendix 1, Section A). In the RM for 5 October 1818 is an announcement that a translation of Hercules Furens was now on sale, but no copy seems to have survived.



1824	<u>Alcestris</u>	Review, <u>Reading Mercury</u> , 18 Oct 1824
1827	<u>Hecuba</u>	Translation in British Library Review, <u>Reading Mercury</u> , 22 Oct 1827

There were apparently no performances in 1812 or 1815. A general election was held during October 1812 (the usual month for performances), and this may have caused the play to be cancelled. No reason for the cancellation in 1815 is immediately obvious. Valpy retired in 1830, and there does not seem to have been a Greek play in that year, or in any later years.

The fullest account available of the origins and success of Dr Valpy's venture is Mary Russell Mitford's description in Belford Regis.<sup>25</sup> According to her, the idea of putting on a Greek play had occurred to Dr Valpy 'about thirty years back' (she is writing in 1835, which suggests 1806 as the date of the first production), on the assumption that

a Greek drama, well got up, would improve the boys both in the theory and practice of elocution, and in the familiar and critical knowledge of the language; that it would fix their attention and stimulate their industry in a manner far beyond any common tasks or examinations; that it would interest their parents and amuse their friends; that the purity of the Greek tragedies rendered them. . . unexceptionable for such a purpose; and that a classical exhibition of so high an order would be worthy of his own name in the world of letters, and of the high reputation of his establishment.<sup>26</sup>

The play was performed in the old schoolroom, before an audience that was 'crowded, intelligent, and enthusiastic', comprising the mayor and corporation, the School Visitors (who were the heads of some of the Oxford colleges), the parents and friends

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25 M.R. Mitford, Belford Regis, I.302-18.

26 M.R. Mitford, Belford Regis, I.309. For a semi-fictitious account of how the custom of the Greek play began, see Oliver Oldfellow, Our School; or Scraps and Scrapes in Schoolboy Life, 72-80.

of the actors, former pupils and 'the principle inhabitants of the town and the neighbourhood' (who came 'for a double reason — they liked it, and it was the fashion').<sup>27</sup> The performances themselves seem to have achieved a high standard, and to have overcome the barrier of a play acted in an unfamiliar language so well that 'even the most unlettered lady was sensible to that antique grace and pathos, and understood a beauty in the words, though not the words'.<sup>28</sup> The subsequent publication of translations of the plays performed must have been undertaken in response to the enthusiasm of the 'unlettered' members of the audience.

At least two of the reviews in the Reading Mercury (those in 1818 and 1821) were written by Miss Mitford at the request of Dr Valpy,<sup>29</sup> and her 1821 review was also reprinted in a London newspaper, the Star, yet another indication of the interest taken in Valpy's Greek plays.<sup>30</sup> The reviews are of the bland, adulatory kind one still associates with reports in local newspapers on amateur performances, with praise heaped on each and every member of the cast and references to the popularity of the occasion. In 1821 we learn that 'the anxiety to procure admission was greater even than on any former occasion' and that many people had been unable to obtain tickets for the last evening of the performance.

Miss Mitford's public remarks on Valpy's plays are more

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27 M.R. Mitford, Belford Regis, I.310-11.

28 M.R. Mitford, Belford Regis, I.315.

29 See L'Estrange, II.42, 140.

30 Star, 22 October 1821, p. 3. The Star had also reprinted the 1809 review in the RM (Star, 25 October 1809) and printed a short notice of the performance of Hercules Furens in October 1818 (Star, 20 October 1818, p. 3).

unreservedly enthusiastic than the comments she makes in her letters, and tell less than the whole truth about her feelings. She never was — and never would have pretended to be — anything other than a very ordinary, very conventional member of her class. Her cheerful common-sense and abundant good humour shine through all her writings, as does her honest love of good literature of all kinds. In her attitude to Greek tragedy she shows a rather old-fashioned preference for Sophocles at a time when Aeschylus was all the rage,<sup>31</sup> and her frequent incomprehension of the dramatic conventions<sup>32</sup> resembles that of the more old-fashioned commentators in the periodicals. It is the conflict between her conventional tastes and her natural response to great writing that gives rise to the inconsistency in her remarks on Greek tragedy.

On 23 November 1821 she told Sir William Elford that since the performance of Orestes she had been reading translations of Greek drama in English, French and Italian in her efforts to get as close as possible to a proper understanding of the originals, and was full of admiration: 'There never was, and never will be, anything like the Greek dramatists. The moulds are broken.' Of the Orestes itself she said, 'There is nothing so charming as. . . the Greek play, with its beautiful accuracy of costume, every fold copied after some antique statue, its fine groupings, and the delicious sound of that magnificent language', and added that the opening scene was 'perhaps one of the finest and truest exhibitions of nature that has ever been

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31 See L'Estrange, II.238.

32 This is best seen in her account of Hercules Furens; see p. 169 below.

given by any poet in any language'.<sup>33</sup> These remarks very closely echo her newspaper review of the play but they contrast strangely with the description of the same play which she sent to Mrs Hofland a month or so later:

The Valpeian play cuts a very grand figure on paper; but, to tell the truth, this fine, great, learned thing was as dull as an unbraced drum. I never yawned half so much in my life. The language is beautiful, as sweet as Italian, and stronger even than sweet. It is just, as to vocal sound, what the Apollonicon is to instrumental; but even that won't do for four hours, and it lasted little less. Everything that evening crept, drawled, "trailed its slow length along". The last time I was in that hall was at the election. O what a difference! All the difference between the false and the true, the living and the dead. O, a Greek play is nothing to an English election: the action so much more interesting, the characters so much better developed and the speeches not half so long.<sup>34</sup>

Obviously the spectacle of the Greek play and the beauty of the language were captivating, but it is asking too much of anyone to sit enthralled through a play being performed in an unknown language, and it is hardly surprising that the performance should have seemed to last for ever, although 'four hours' may be an exaggeration.<sup>35</sup>

But despite her boredom, Miss Mitford was made to feel that here was something worthy of better acquaintance; hence her attempt soon afterwards 'to get at the Greek dramatists' through translations, and her enthusiastic response: 'I . . . am so in love with Aeschylus and Sophocles (Euripides, though very fine, is rather in a lower style — more pathetic than sublime) that I can

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33 L'Estrange, II.140-41.

34 Letters of M.R. Mitford, ed. Chorley, I.116-17.

35 The Orestes is comparatively long, and amateur productions usually slow. See Peter Walcott, Greek Drama in its Theatrical and Social Context, 11-21, for a discussion of the time taken to perform a Greek play.



really hardly think or talk of anything else, Sophocles in particular'.<sup>36</sup> Her conflicting feelings can also be seen by comparing her eulogies with the hilarious account of the plot of Hercules Furens which she sent to Sir William Elford in 1818.<sup>37</sup> When the play begins, she tells Elford, 'Hercules is on his travels — he is making a little tour into hell — and his family on earth are in the sort of consternation which sometimes happens when the head of a house sets out on such a journey.' Moreover, his family is under threat of death from Lycus, and by the end of the first Act have agreed 'to be killed peaceably. . . Mrs. Megara-Hercules stipulating only that she and her children should retire to their toilettes, send for mourning and milliners, and die in proper form and colour.' Acts Two and Three are described in the same burlesque fashion, up to the tremendous climax in which Hercules kills his wife and children, 'whilst the Chorus (instead of running for constables and strait-waistcoats, hiding the children in the coal-hole, and cramming the lady up the chimney) content themselves with peeping quietly through the keyhole and telling themselves and the audience all about it.' She declines to describe the final two Acts since nothing much happens in them, and ends by remarking that this truthful account will compensate for the 'puff' of the play which she has written for the local paper.

Despite her reservations about stage performances of Greek plays, she genuinely loved Greek drama. A letter to B.R. Haydon in 1824, which begins with an account of that year's Reading Greek

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36 L'Estrange, II.141.

37 L'Estrange, II.40-42.



play, develops into a discussion of the relative merits of the works of all three tragedians,<sup>38</sup> and Greek tragedy even found its way into her one novel, Atherton. Set in about 1819, the plot includes Dr Glenham, a rector who spends most of his time working on an edition of the Troades.<sup>39</sup> Miss Mitford had originally had Glenham editing the Hecuba, but on learning that Porson had edited this play, she felt that Glenham, whom she had characterised as a Cambridge man and a disciple of Porson, must be made to take a play other than those edited by this great scholar. She therefore wrote to her friend the Rev. Hugh Pearson, asking him to suggest a play of Euripides which was 'open ground' in 1818-1819, for she was most anxious to be correct in such small details.<sup>40</sup>

But although Dr Valpy's plays introduced Miss Mitford, and doubtless other people, to Greek tragedy, they were probably too local an event to have any very lasting influence despite the reports in the London Star, and they serve to confirm the general belief that a professional production of Greek drama would be laughed off the stage. Between 1800 and 1840 several plays were written which took their plots from the Greek myths, but they can be called imitations only in the widest sense. Carl J. Stratman's Bibliography of English Printed Tragedy lists eight such plays,<sup>41</sup> although there are several more with vaguely classical titles.

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38 L'Estrange, II.191-92.

39 See Mary Russell Mitford, Atherton, and Other Tales, I.117, 261-63, 277.

40 Letters of M.R. Mitford, ed. Chorley, II.212-13.

41 Carl J. Stratman, Bibliography of English Printed Tragedy, 1565-1900, 779-786. Two of the eight listed plays, John Burneybusby, The Siege of Troy (1819), and Edward Sinnett, Atreus and Thyestes (1822), are not included in the discussion below because no copies are available in this country.

Most of these plays were never staged and had only a limited circulation.

The earliest of them was William Sotheby's Orestes,<sup>42</sup> which retold, with several variations, the familiar story of Orestes' killing of Clytemnestra. Coleridge's flattery of it in a letter to the author<sup>43</sup> may be taken with a pinch of salt, as he was inclined to kow-tow to men of a higher and more affluent social class. It certainly is not a particularly good play. One tires of the unceasing reminders that Fate is omnipotent and inevitable, and it is hard not to laugh at the repeated melodramatic cries of 'Vengeance' and the unintentionally farcical final scene. The selection of incidents and delineation of character depend mainly on Sophocles, but Sotheby's play cannot really be called a faithful imitation of Greek tragedy: there are too many scene changes, too much inessential action and no real tragic sense. It is a bad English play written round an old Greek story. On its first publication it was not widely reviewed. The British Critic thought Sotheby had made a 'laudable' attempt, although the story was 'too remote from our manners, and too disgusting to the feelings of modern readers, to be rendered palatable'.<sup>44</sup> The Annual Review also praised the play.<sup>45</sup> When it was reprinted among Sotheby's collected tragedies, the few reviews were unfavourable.<sup>46</sup>

In 1812 John Galt published a collection of five tragedies,

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42 William Sotheby, Orestes, a Tragedy, in Five Acts (London, 1802).

43 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, II.874.

44 BC, xx (1802), 64-66.

45 Annual Review, i (1802), 649.

46 MR, lxxvii (1815), 56; EcR, n.s., iv (1815), 478-79.

including two named Agamemnon and Clytemnestra.<sup>47</sup> He was apparently more directly inspired by Alfieri than by the Greek tragedians,<sup>48</sup> and like Sotheby has produced plays which owe only the story to the Greek tradition, although he did claim to have followed the Greeks in adhering to the unities and keeping his plot short and unadorned.<sup>49</sup> His plays are fast-moving and are written in bare, harsh and realistic language. Egysthus, for example, says of Clytemnestra:

Now would this harpy, for her own success,  
Crush me as if I were indeed a worm.  
So climb they all at court, and why not I.  
Ambition builds from ruins. . .<sup>50</sup>

and Orestes greets his friend with these brusque words:

Well, my Pylades, have you seen my sister?  
How does she fare in the maternal brothel?<sup>51</sup>

His Agamemnon is a benign fool, his Clytemnestra a vacillating coward who desires her husband's death in order to save her reputation, and his Egysthus is not even of royal blood, but an opportunist groom. Electra, who appears in the second play, is a helpless weeping female who elicits such chivalrous conduct from Pylades that one can hear wedding-bells chiming gently in the distance.<sup>52</sup> Galt also tried to mitigate the grossness and horror he found in the Greek plays by toning down the murder scenes, but in doing so he has denied his own plays the very pity and terror

47 John Galt, The Tragedies of Maddalen, Agamemnon, Lady Macbeth, Antonia & Clytemnestra (London, 1812).

48 G.H. Needler, John Galt's Dramas: a Brief Review, 10.

49 Galt, Tragedies, iv.

50 Agamemnon, II.iv (Tragedies, p. 81).

51 Clytemnestra, I.ii (Tragedies, p. 218).

52 See also the discussion by Needler, John Galt's Dramas, 11-12.

which are so vital to the success of the versions of Aeschylus and Sophocles. Galt's collection of plays was generally damned by the critics. It was reviewed in the Quarterly by J.W. Croker, who was very sarcastic about Galt's pretensions to rival the Greek tragedians: 'some of Mr Galt's highest beauties arise indisputably from the lucky circumstance of his being no scholar',<sup>53</sup> and other reviewers were even less complimentary. The British Critic attacked Galt for daring to think he had refined the barbarity of the Greek.<sup>54</sup> The Monthly Review dismissed the plays as 'extravagant deviations from good taste',<sup>55</sup> while the Critical Review ironically praised Galt for relying on 'strength of poetical expression' rather than plot or character for dramatic success.<sup>56</sup>

Neither Sotheby nor Galt wrote with any hope of having their plays staged, and indeed it was not until 1825 that any producer ventured to put on a play based on Greek tragedy. This was Orestes in Argos by Peter Bayley,<sup>57</sup> which was given a special performance at the Theatre Royal on 20 April 1825 to benefit the widow of the author, who had recently died.<sup>58</sup> Bayley, by his own admission, was indebted to Sophocles in the first half of the play, and to Alfieri in the second half, with ideas also drawn from Voltaire.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the influence of Macbeth is occasionally visible, for

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53 QR, xi (1814), 33-41 (see especially pp. 37-38).

54 BC, n.s., i (1814), 529-38 (see especially pp. 532-33).

55 MR, lxxiii (1814), 264-72 (see especially pp. 264, 268, 272).

56 Critical Review, 4th s., ii (1812), 483-94 (see especially p. 484).

57 Peter Bayley, Orestes in Argos; a Tragedy, in Five Acts. . . As First Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent-Garden, on Wednesday, April 20, 1825 (London, 1825).

58 NMM, xv (1825), 201.

59 See Bayley's prefatory note.

example in the incantations of Nemesis and the three Furies while thunder and 'strange music' are heard in the background;<sup>60</sup> in the utterances of the usurper Aegisthus:

I would be king in Argos...safely king;<sup>61</sup>

and in Clytemnestra's call on darkness to hide her fears:

Come fearful Night! Make haste to scarf me up  
Throng'd as thou art with terrors, from a day  
Still more terrific.<sup>62</sup>

As with the other 'imitations', the main Greek influence is in the choice of story, although Bayley's characters, particularly Electra and Clytemnestra, are close to those of Sophocles. Bayley's own contribution to the plot is the denouement, in which Clytemnestra was killed unintentionally by her son while he was in a state of mental distraction. Like Galt, Bayley was trying to tone down the revolting crime of matricide. The play itself is tolerable, although too melodramatic for twentieth-century tastes, and although the action is needlessly prolonged simply in order to fill the required five Acts.

Orestes in Argos was given contradictory reviews in the Literary Gazette and the New Monthly Magazine. The Literary Gazette was very grudging in its admission that the acting was 'tolerable' and that 'if there be nothing to praise, there is nothing to condemn'.<sup>63</sup> The reviewer in the New Monthly Magazine

60 They appear in two scenes: Orestes in Argos, I.i (pp. 1-2) and V.i (pp. 48-49).

61 Orestes in Argos, I.ii (p. 10). Compare Macbeth, III.i.47: 'To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus.'

62 Orestes in Argos, III.i (p. 22). Compare Macbeth, III.ii.46-47: 'Come, seeling night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day. . .'

63 LG, ix (1825), 269-70.



was much kinder and much more judicious in his consideration of the problems involved in the adaptation of Greek legend to the modern stage. He accepted that a modern writer must substitute human motivations for divine intervention, and must try to make Orestes' matricide less distasteful. He praised the main scenes of Bayley's play, which he thought had on the whole been well written and well performed.<sup>64</sup> According to the New Monthly Magazine the audience applauded the play wholeheartedly (except for the scenes with Nemesis and the Furies), but there does not seem to have been a second performance, and ten years were to pass before another imitation of Greek tragedy was seen in the theatre.

Thomas Noon Talfourd's Ion was not at first intended for the stage, having been privately printed in 1835 in a limited edition.<sup>65</sup> But it was favourably reviewed in the Quarterly, which even suggested that only a few minor alterations would be needed for it to be made suitable for public performance.<sup>66</sup> A second privately printed edition soon followed, which was reviewed in the Edinburgh,<sup>67</sup> and then several other editions. The play's popularity encouraged Macready to venture a production of it, which was seen twice at Covent Garden, on 26 May and 1 June 1836. The theatre was packed, the audience absolutely delighted.<sup>68</sup> Unlike the plays already

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64 NMM, xv (1825), 201-03.

65 See Stratman, 638-40. All references below are to the edition of the play in Thomas Noon Talfourd, Tragedies. . . Ion.— The Athenian Captive.— Glencoe (London, 1840).

66 QR, liv (1835), 505-16.

67 ER, lxiii (1836), 143-56.

68 Ath, ix (1836), 386; LG, xx (1836), 347. See also Ath, ix (1836), 371-73; MM, n.s., xxi (1836), 8-16.

examined, Talfourd's play is not a new version of an original Greek tragedy. He derived the character of Ion, a foundling brought up in a temple, from Euripides, but invented a plot of his own. In Talfourd's play, the foundling Ion is really the son of Adrastus, tyrant of Argos. When the play begins, Argos is suffering from a plague, which the Delphic Oracle proclaims will only cease when Adrastus and his line are wiped out. Ion is chosen by lot to kill Adrastus, but on discovering that Adrastus is really his father, cannot carry out the execution. Someone else kills Adrastus, and Ion is crowned in his place. Ion then resolves to kill himself in fulfilment of the oracle, and as he lies dying, news comes that the plague has abated. The plot itself has several ideas obviously taken from Greek tragedy, in particular the role played by the Delphic Oracle and the forces of destiny. There is little action onstage, the development of the story depending mainly on description and narrative of offstage action, as is common in Greek tragedy, and at times the language is strongly reminiscent of the Greek manner. For example, in Ctesiphon's description of how his father died after being struck by Adrastus:

When I return'd,  
I found my father on the nearest bench  
Within our door, his thinly silver'd head  
Supported by wan hands, which hid his face  
And would not be withdrawn; — no groan, no sigh  
Was audible, and we might only learn  
By short convulsive tremblings of his frame  
That life still flicker'd in it — yet at last,  
By some unearthly inspiration roused,  
He dropp'd his wither'd hands, and sat erect  
As in his manhood's glory.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ion, II.ii (Tragedies, p. 46).

These resemblances secured for Ion the reputation of being a fine example of a play in the classical manner, although the Edinburgh thought it could have been given a little more 'antique colouring'.<sup>70</sup> But it is non-Greek in its inclusion of a romantic love-interest (Ion is betrothed to Clemanthe, daughter of the priest of Apollo, and dies in her arms), and its adherence to the five-Act structure and elaborate scenery of the contemporary theatre; and for all its reputed classicism, it was the romantic qualities of the play, and the histrionics of Macready, that secured it such an enthusiastic reception from its two audiences.

Macready persuaded Talfourd to write another 'Greek' play. This was The Athenian Captive, which was put on by Macready at the Haymarket on 4 August 1838.<sup>71</sup> The reviews all described the play as Greek because it had a simple plot with few incidents, and used fate as the force behind the action;<sup>72</sup> but this description is far from the truth. The Athenian Captive is Greek only in its setting in Corinth and the names of its characters; otherwise it is typical nineteenth-century melodrama, with its frequent changes of scene and elaboration of incident, its improbable plot and its over-emotional characters with a propensity for fainting in a crisis and then leaping to their feet again a few moments later. As with Talfourd's Ion, it was Macready's extravagant acting that the audience really enjoyed.

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70 ER, lxiii (1836), 154-55. See also MM, n.s., xxi (1836), 16. The reviewer in MM was reminded of the Antigone and Oedipus Tyrannus when reading Ion, although he found no evidence of actual plagiarism.

71 See LG, xxii (1838), 273, 509. Stratman, p. 637, wrongly gives the date of performance as 28 April 1838.

72 EcR, n.s., iv (1838), 181-90; LG, xxii (1838), 273-74; MR, n.s., ii (1838), 173-84.

The main conclusion to be drawn from this necessarily rapid examination of the imitations of Greek tragedy is that the Greek element is always considerably diluted. The authors may have liked to think that they were improving on the original plays, and making them more suitable for the refined tastes of their own day, but their efforts are at best tolerable and at worst rubbish. It is perhaps not entirely coincidental that there were no stage productions until 1825, by which time there was a considerable amount of interest in Greek tragedy, but the low standards of drama in the early nineteenth century made a successful stage production of Greek tragedy, whether of the original play or in a close imitation, quite impossible.<sup>73</sup> Better-informed critics might like to think that Talfourd was in some way re-creating the Greek classics, but enjoyment of real Greek tragedy was confined to the educated reader in the privacy of his or her own home, as is clear from the remarks of an anonymous biographer of Talfourd. Referring in particular to Ion, the more arguably Greek of Talfourd's plays, he said:

Greek in its conception and feeling, thoroughly classic in execution, and breathing throughout the inspired imagery of poetry, we may be permitted to say, that though many other dramatic poems have attained a higher excellence in power of thought and beauty of language, few, if any, in our literature present chaster models of a style and expression not unworthy of Aeschylus. "Ion", though acted, was scarcely an acting play. It has too little of stage claptrap for the vitiated taste of a London audience. The truth, if it were honestly told, we suspect being, that

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73 Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama, 1660-1900. Vol. IV, Early Nineteenth Century Drama, 1800-1850, remarks (p. 191) on the abundance of 'poetic' dramas written at this time, most of which were never performed, and suggests (p. 207) that this was because poets did not take the trouble to learn the craft of writing for the stage. This is certainly true of the would-be imitators of Greek tragedy.



people intellectual enough to enjoy the higher order of the drama do not frequent theatres; and they who do, have a taste only for coarser excitement.<sup>74</sup>

By thus restricting Greek tragedy to the study, early nineteenth-century readers not only managed to avoid the need for a proper visualisation of the plays in their original setting — despite the exhortations of Schlegel and Campbell — but even made it more likely that Greek tragedy would be in a way misused. Apart from the gleeful dissection which Greek tragedy was now suffering at the hands of second-rate pedants, the over-glamorisation of ancient Greece was now widespread,<sup>75</sup> and it was only too easy for readers of Greek literature to bury themselves in their books to escape from the outside world and reshape the past to suit their own needs. H.F. Cary, translator of Dante, Aristophanes and Pindar, was a voracious reader, as the entries in his literary journal testify,<sup>76</sup> but he was also one of the saner and more objective readers of Greek literature. Greek drama features regularly in his journal, and it is pleasant to see him reading the plays as literature rather than collections of philological and syntactical specimens. For example, he made notes comparing the differing methods of the three tragedians in their handling of the murder of Clytemnestra,<sup>77</sup> wrote appreciatively of the pathos in the *Trachiniae*,<sup>78</sup> and voted the *Hercules Furens* one

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74 A Memoir of Mr Justice Talfourd. By a Member of the Oxford Circuit, 7. See also Nicoll, IV.177.

75 See Levin, 29-31, who criticises the Romantics for ignoring the fact that Greek and Latin were not dead languages to those who spoke them.

76 Copious extracts from H.F. Cary's literary journal are included in Henry Cary's Memoir of his father.

77 Cary, I.79-81.

78 Cary, I.262.



of Euripides' finest plays.<sup>79</sup> His letters also occasionally refer to his reading. He told the Rev. Thomas Price that as he read the Philoctetes, he was strongly affected by the hero's 'very natural expressions of bodily pain', which vividly reminded him of his own wife's recent sufferings in childbirth.<sup>80</sup> He also took an interest in translations of the classics, mentioning among others Potter's translation of Aeschylus.<sup>81</sup>

But despite his voluminous reading, Cary seems to have retained some sense of proportion, unlike the unmarried clergyman friend of Jefferson Hogg whose entire life was devoted to the reading of Greek, and who could have told you the day of the month or the season of the year, according to which part of which author he was reading at the time.<sup>82</sup> Such absorption was bound to distort the judgement of many readers, who saw in Greek literature only what they wanted to see. Leigh Hunt, for example, believed that Greek tragedy was unfaithful to the Greek spirit, seeing the Greeks as 'a well-adjusted race who had lived in harmony with nature'.<sup>83</sup> Peacock's image of Greece was similar — a cheerful Arcadia peopled by satyrs who looked like benevolent clergymen.<sup>84</sup> His favourite authors, Nonnus, Pausanias and Athenaeus, were unusual and little read (one suspects that Peacock deliberately chose them for that very reason), and it is no surprise that of the

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79 Cary, I.338.

80 Cary, I.198.

81 Cary, I.269. He often read translations to his wife. See, for example, Cary, I.113 and 201.

82 Hogg, Life of Shelley, 531-34. See also Howard Mills, Peacock, His Circle and his Age, 24-30.

83 Webb, 59-60.

84 Webb, 57.

tragedians he preferred Euripides for his intellectualism.<sup>85</sup> It was Peacock who first encouraged Shelley to read Greek drama as literature, and who was the driving-force behind the intensive study of Greek undertaken by himself, Shelley and Hogg in the winter of 1815-1816.<sup>86</sup> Mills discusses the trio's absorption in the study of Greek, and rightly judges them to have used their reading as an indiscriminating opiate, rather than a tool for the better understanding of a past age.<sup>87</sup> Both Peacock and Shelley later admitted as much. Writing to Hogg in 1821, Shelley said, 'I have employed Greek in large doses, & I consider it to be the only sure remedy for diseases of the mind.'<sup>88</sup> Many years later, in the introduction to his three-part series 'Horae Dramaticae' written for Fraser's Magazine, Peacock referred to Greek drama as 'a refuge of light and tranquillity from the storm and darkness of everyday life'.<sup>89</sup>

Nor were they alone in their wishes to use Greek literature to escape from personal troubles and the hustle and bustle of the modern world. Henry Nelson Coleridge suggested that a knowledge of the classics would provide a man with a lifelong means of relaxation better than any ephemeral magazines;<sup>90</sup> and R.A. Willmott admitted in the New Monthly Magazine that when he began to read Greek drama he felt his 'senses bound by the balmy

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85 Webb, 56-57.

86 Works of T.L. Peacock, VIII.99-100.

87 Mills, 19-30.

88 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.360.

89 Works of T.L. Peacock, I.clxxxvi-clxxxvii.

90 H.N. Coleridge, Introduction to the Study of the Greek Classic Poets, 33.

influences of a summer dream', and was like a man 'who has escaped for a brief season from his painful confinement in the midst of ignorance and commerce, and who hastens unto his own native village'.<sup>91</sup> The reason for the attraction of Greek literature as a kind of sedative is suggested by Levin, who observed that, unlike us, the Greeks were not in the habit of consulting the past before taking any step in the present, being supremely confident in themselves, and that the Greek language was pure because the Greeks themselves read and spoke no other.<sup>92</sup> It is the impression of self-certainty and clarity, however erroneously come by, that makes the reading of Greek so seductive a pastime in an age of gloom and doubt.

Moreover, it was in the early nineteenth century that people really began to be aware of the changes wrought by the passing centuries, and to see the great gulf between their own era and classical antiquity. As Keble put it in his essay 'On Translation': 'Our view of antiquity is after all but a twilight landscape, in which, though we may trace out the principal proportions, our sight is too dim to distinguish the complexion and distinction of each part, separately considered.'<sup>93</sup> The eighteenth century, in its universal confidence, had believed that all problems had been solved by the ancient world. Romantic realisation that this was not the case, as well as the desire to

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91 NMM, xxxv (1832), 215. Compare also BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 371. The sentiment is very similar to that of Matthew Arnold in 'The Scholar Gypsy' and 'Thyrsis'.

92 Levin, 75-76.

93 John Keble, 'On Translation from Dead Languages', Oxford English Prize Essays, III.29-51. The quotation comes from pp. 38-39.

understand Greek writers as individuals rather than as specimens taken from a homogeneous whole, made readers of Greek literature less assured and less uniform in their approach. They read Aeschylus for his extravagant language and his ideas on the fall of tyrants, Sophocles for his perfection and aura of tranquillity, and Euripides for his individual scenes of touching pathos. This may be selective and highly subjective reading, but it explains the conflict in the early nineteenth-century attitude to Greek tragedy: the heart responded naturally to the beauty of great literature, while the head recoiled from conventions so alien to modern taste as to border on the ridiculous.

It was at this point that the Schlegel brothers launched their appeal to readers of the classics to place their reading in its proper historical context. The extent to which the Schlegels themselves succeeded in this task is irrelevant here: what matters is that they were responsible for making the educated reader more aware of the difference between the remote past and the present, and that the turning-point may be placed approximately at 1820, when Blackwood's was already a success and the London and New Monthly were about to become its principal challengers.

Before this time, and for some time after, Greek tragedy encounters impatience and incomprehension. Hazlitt dismissed the plot of the Prometheus as 'improbable', 'uninteresting' and 'artificial'.<sup>94</sup> In a discussion with Lord Lansdowne about the merits of Greek tragedy, Thomas Moore criticised the Prometheus and Alcestis for not fitting his own ideas of what a play should be, while Lord Lansdowne offered the old chestnut that Philoctetes

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94 ER, xxvi (1816), 82.

invited ridicule for making such a fuss about a sore foot.<sup>95</sup> The reviewer of Drennan's Electra in the Monthly Review somewhat wearily opened his remarks with: 'To those of our readers who still retain any relish for the old Athenian drama, they [its merits] are in all probability well known; and to those who do not, our observations could scarcely afford entertainment or interest.'<sup>96</sup> In 1820 the classical scholar D.K. Sandford explained to readers of the Edinburgh Review that Greek tragedy failed to reach the highest excellence because of its clumsy mythology, misguided religion and restriction on female characterisation.<sup>97</sup> In 1826 the Gentleman's Magazine adhered happily to the delusion that no-one was interested in Greek tragedy or comedy, because of the general opinion 'of the harshness and uncouthness of all that belongs to antiquity'.<sup>98</sup> In 1828 John Williams's attack on Greek tragedy in the Edinburgh Review ridiculed the tragedians' adherence to the three unities, found fault with the convention of the messenger-speech for not matching his own notions of how plays should be written, damned the Chorus for being 'the most notable discovery for the interruption of all action, the extinction of all passion and the introduction of the most relentless, hard-hearted, mortal prosing, that ever was made in any age or country', and dismissed the plots as slender and uninventive.<sup>99</sup> How

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95 Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore, ed. Lord John Russell, II.290-91. See also ER, xlvii (1828), 427, for similar remarks about Philoctetes and Oedipus.

96 MR, lxxxix (1819), 26.

97 ER, xxxiv (1820), 271-73.

98 GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1826), 35.

99 ER, xlvii (1828), 418-29.



Williams could dare to be so abusive of Greek drama at a time when contemporary drama was in an appallingly debilitated state is a source of amazement, but it was unfortunately only too common for the Reviews, which saw themselves as arbiters of public taste, to exhibit bigotry and arrogance when confronted with the unfamiliar.

It was this ignorance and prejudice that the newer magazines sought to rectify in their articles on Greek tragedy, by explaining the conventions of costume, plot and chorus, by exploding the old 'three unities' rule which had been invented by the neoclassical French interpreters of Aristotle, and by offering examples of scenes in translation to illustrate their points and, perhaps, to whet the appetites of their readers. These explanations, and Schlegel's exhortations, had no noticeable effect on the Reviews until very near the end of the period, whatever they may have done for the average reader. It was not until 1839 that a reviewer in the Eclectic Review honestly faced the difficulties inherent in the proper understanding of Greek tragedy, and encouraged his readers not to judge ancient drama by modern standards.<sup>100</sup> It had taken this length of time for Schlegel to become a university text-book, and for his influence on the critics to be felt.

The concentration on character and scenes provoking strong emotion in the magazine articles provides another clue to the reason for the development of interest in Greek tragedy. Romantic critics of drama gave special attention to the study of dramatic characters in isolation, and it was quite natural for them to

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100 EcR, 4th s., vi (1839), 635-51.

approach Greek tragedy in the same way. Besides, such a study comfortably avoided most of the problems caused by the different conventions of Greek drama. J.H. Newman's assertion in his essay 'Poetry with Reference to Aristotle's Poetics' that Greek tragedy was read, not for the plot, but the characters, sentiments and diction, quite clearly indicates that Greek tragedy was not being studied as poetic drama, but as dramatic poetry.<sup>101</sup> Another interesting point, for which Schlegel is partly responsible, is the way in which writers frequently compare classical characters with Shakespearean characters. Campbell compared the madness of Ajax, and the sympathy which it excites in the reader, with the madness of Lear,<sup>102</sup> and even earlier than this, Peacock had written to the Morning Chronicle with a translation of some lines from the Hippolytus, which he compared with Hamlet's soliloquy, 'To be, or not to be. . .'<sup>103</sup> One of the commonest of all comparisons was between Clytemnestra in the Agamemnon and Lady Macbeth.<sup>104</sup>

The influence of Schlegel and the new magazines is most strongly at work in the ten-year period 1815-1825, but it is not until after 1830 that the majority of translations of tragedy appear, and there is a five-year gap between the small group of earlier translations ending in 1824, and the translations of Kennedy and Palin in 1829. At first sight this gap is rather

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101 John Henry Newman, 'Poetry with Reference to Aristotle's Poetics', Essays and Sketches, I.57-81. Compare the similar sentiments in BC, n.s., xi (1819), 656-58. Newman's essay was first published in the short-lived London Review, i (1829), 153-71, under the title 'Greek Tragedy'.

102 NMM, xvi (1826), 530.

103 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII, 216-20, 481-82. See also Chapter 8, pp. 246-47.

104 See, for example, EdM, i (1817), 305; LM, viii (1823), 262-63; NMM, xxxv (1832), 226; Ath, v (1832), 320-21.

puzzling, since one would have expected the interest fostered by the articles in Blackwood's, the New Monthly and the London to lead fairly quickly to the publication and reading of more Greek tragedy in translation. The explanation is most probably to be found in certain developments in the publishing business in the mid-1820s.

First of all, there was a marked loss of interest in imaginative literature. It took Longmans four years to sell the 500 copies of their first edition of the collected poems of Wordsworth, which they published in 1820, although Wordsworth's reputation as a poet was constantly improving. And soon after Byron's death in 1824, a writer in Blackwood's remarked that nowadays 'few write poetry. . . and nobody at all reads it'.<sup>105</sup> This drop in sales was a serious matter to many booksellers and publishers, who had joined other businessmen in investing large sums of money in speculative schemes with the kind of heady irresponsibility reminiscent of the South Sea Bubble,<sup>106</sup> and who suffered badly when the commercial world began to feel the consequences of its folly. The expected financial crash came at the end of 1825, with the bankruptcy of the publisher Archibald Constable and the printers James Ballantyne and Co. following soon afterwards in January 1826.<sup>107</sup>

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105 Ian Jack, English Literature, 1815-1832, 421. See also A.S. Collins, The Profession of Letters: a Study of the Relation of Author to Patron, Publisher, and Public, 1780-1832, 228-35.

106 Thomas Constable, Archibald Constable and his Literary Correspondents, III.333; Frank Arthur Mumby, Publishing and Bookselling: a History from the Earliest Times to the Present Day, 222-23.

107 See Archibald Constable, III, Chapters 17-20, and J.G. Lockhart, Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart., VI, Chapters 5-6, for conflicting accounts of the crash.

But before Constable went bankrupt, he had been laying plans for a revolution in publishing — cheap books on a very large scale.<sup>108</sup> Writing to his London agent, Joseph Ogle Robinson of the firm Hurst, Robinson and Co., in June 1825, Constable explained why he had decided to take such an innovatory step:

The demand in the higher and literary classes, or those who, not many years ago, were the purchasers of books, and for whose taste alone publishers could speculate, I think you allow continues to be fully better than ever; but there has been, and there exists at present, a desire of knowledge and a demand for books in the middle ranks and manufacturing classes of society altogether unprecedented, to supply which will occasion a demand to fully ten times the amount of any hitherto existing.<sup>109</sup>

He felt that the best way to exploit this potential readership was by publishing good-quality reprints of the best literature of the day, and he therefore proposed a work, to be called Constable's Miscellany, in weekly instalments, two numbers to be published every Saturday at the cost of one shilling each. When one realises that in the summer of 1826, when the publishing slump was at its worst, Charles Knight was also contemplating the publication of what he called a 'National Library',<sup>110</sup> and that John Murray was apparently also giving thought to a similar plan,<sup>111</sup> it is clear that Constable's proposal was most opportune. Not only were the middle classes replacing the upper class as the most influential sector of the reading public, but publishers had gone

108 For an account of the inception and development of Constable's scheme, see Archibald Constable, III.305-16, 324-25, 331-32, 348-66.

109 Archibald Constable, III.348-49. See also Constable's preface to the Miscellany, quoted by Ian Jack, 429-30.

110 Passages, II.44.

111 Collins, 200, says that Murray was forestalled by Constable only because the former was by nature more cautious.



on for too long charging extortionately high prices for their products. This 'unnatural, bigoted, and unprofitable system', as Knight called it,<sup>112</sup> could not hold up for much longer against the resistance of the growing number of readers who refused to pay six shillings for a duodecimo, twelve to fourteen shillings for an octavo and two guineas for a quarto. Furthermore, this new class of reader demanded knowledge rather than entertainment in its reading, a natural result of the increasingly non-classical education of the middle classes which was 'less literary, and more secular and utilitarian',<sup>113</sup> and it forced the more forward-thinking publishers to reconsider their booklists and the economics of their businesses. Another factor that facilitated the production of large, low-price editions was the development of the steam printing-press, which could produce 1100 sheets per hour, and made printing very much cheaper than the old method which needed two men to produce 250 impressions of one side only per hour. There were at least twenty-four such presses at work in London by 1824.<sup>114</sup>

Constable's project, although delayed by the worry surrounding his bankruptcy, eventually went ahead, and the first volume of the Miscellany was published in January 1827. At 3s 6d it was dearer than he had first envisaged, but even so its success astounded the publishing world,<sup>115</sup> which had been inclined to think that 'the mighty autocrat of Edinburgh literature had gone

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112 Knight, The Old Printer, 239. See also Altick, 260-67, on the cost of books in the early nineteenth century.

113 A point made by Collins, 177-78.

114 Passages, I.161-63.

115 Collins, 199.



"daft"',<sup>116</sup> and encouraged Knight and Murray to enter the field. Murray's Family Library and Knight's Library of Entertaining Knowledge were then followed by a multitude of 'libraries' of inexpensive books,<sup>117</sup> including Valpy's Family Classical Library.

The publisher Abraham John Valpy (1787-1854), a son of Dr Valpy of Reading School, fancied himself as a latter-day Aldus or Stephanus in the field of classical printing and scholarship. Most of his publications were classical works, including reissues of Stephens's Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (1816-28) in twelve volumes and the Delphin classics (1819-30) in 141 volumes, as well as the Classical Journal and the Family Classical Library.<sup>118</sup> The Thesaurus apparently sold well, but the Delphin series was less successful.<sup>119</sup> His prospectus for the Family Classical Library states that he expects the series to be of use to those whose education did not have much time for the classics, those who wanted to keep up their acquaintance with books they had once known, and women, whose education denied them the chance of learning Greek and Latin. He adds the intriguing information that such a series of translations of the classics had recently been published in France, and in Russia a similar series was in progress.<sup>120</sup> His initial proposal was to publish forty volumes at monthly intervals, but the series eventually ran to fifty-two volumes, at a price of 4s 6d each, and (no doubt to keep his costs to a minimum) he

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116 Passages, I.278.

117 Ian Jack, 430-31, lists the principal series.

118 DNB.

119 Thomas Frognall Dibdin, Bibliophobia. Remarks on the Present Languid and Depressed State of Literature and the Book Trade, 56-57.

120 LG, xiii (1829), 852.

usually reprinted old translations.<sup>121</sup>

From the appearance of its first volume on 1st January 1830, the Family Classical Library was warmly welcomed by the critics, who all agreed with Valpy in his estimation of the value of such a series. 'Of the numerous works now publishing in monthly volumes,' proclaimed the Athenaeum in 1831, 'there is none that merits public patronage more than the "Family Classical Library".'<sup>122</sup> The Monthly Review felt that it was important for people to know something about works which had had so profound an influence on later civilisation.<sup>123</sup> The Monthly Magazine praised the series for being 'cheap, and, beyond all cavil, useful'.<sup>124</sup> The New Monthly Magazine approved of a series which made translations of the classics so much more accessible than before.<sup>125</sup> Similarly, the Metropolitan was pleased to see that the translation of Aeschylus was prefaced by Harford's essay on Greek drama, which would help 'the mere English reader' to understand and appreciate better what he was reading.<sup>126</sup> The value of the series to 'the youth of both sexes, as well as to a large portion of the reading community' was a point generally made in all the reviews.<sup>127</sup>

John Murray made a tentative entry into the field of

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121 For Aeschylus and Euripides, he used Potter's translations, and for Sophocles, he used Francklin's translation. See Appendix 1, Section A.

122 Ath, iv (1831), 646.

123 MR, 4th s., i (1831), 615-17.

124 MM, n.s., xi (1830), 100-01.

125 NMM, xxx (1830), 142-43.

126 Met, viii (1833), 47.

127 Words quoted from GM, xcix<sup>2</sup> (1829), 541. Compare LG, xiv (1830), 334-35, where the reviewer also sees the series as of use to the scholar who wants to get at the facts quickly.

translations of the classics. His Family Library had a 'Dramatic Series' as a subsection, of which the fourth volume, published in 1831, was entitled Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets. Aeschylus. This was an abridged reprint of Potter's translation, with an introductory essay, and illustrated by a selection from Flaxman's drawings. Several scenes in each play were omitted, with a prose link being substituted, in accordance with the editor's desire to divest the translations 'of all that was thought uncongenial to an English taste'.<sup>128</sup> For example, the Agamemnon was abridged by omitting the Watchman's prologue, the first strophic triad of the eisodos, Clytemnestra's account of the misfortunes suffered by the defeated Trojans, the herald's description of the storm and Clytemnestra's speech as Agamemnon enters the palace. The introductory essay seems to have been specially written for this edition. The writer expresses his debt to Barthelemy and Schlegel, among others (p. 4), in what is intended as an introduction for the non-classical reader to Greek drama. Its five short chapters (pp. 13-50) deal with the early history of Greek tragedy, the life and work of Aeschylus, the Athenian dramatic festivals, the Greek theatre and Aristotle's Art of Poetry. A notice on page 291 announces the intention to publish a second volume on Sophocles and a third on Euripides, 'should the present attempt be favourably received'. These subsequent volumes would include, in their introductions, some remarks on 'the history and design of ancient poetry in general', and the reasons for our enjoyment of tragedy. It received fewer reviews than Valpy's translations, but the reviewers made much the

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128 Popular Specimens, 11.

same point about the value of the book to the non-classicist.<sup>129</sup>

But although the volume of Aeschylus was intended as the first of three, no more were published, which must mean that the Aeschylus did not sell well enough for Murray to continue the series. He may have decided that the competition from Valpy was too strong, since Valpy's editions of the Greek tragedians were all published in 1832; but the fact that in 1834 the notorious remainder bookseller Thomas Tegg took the entire series of the Family Library off Murray's hands suggests that it was not only the Aeschylus which had sold badly.<sup>130</sup> Lytton saw these cheap 'libraries' as nine-days'-wonders which had 'at length fallen the prey of their own numbers',<sup>131</sup> and it is also possible that some of them failed to attract hoped-for sales among working-class readers.<sup>132</sup>

It was close to 1830 before these inexpensive 'libraries' got well under way, and a year or so before the translations of Greek drama were published. Meanwhile, the political climate was becoming steadily more turbulent, as reform continued to be the major issue of the day. Such was the public unrest throughout the country that sales of books, and even periodicals, were seriously affected. Wordsworth learned on a visit to Scotland in 1831 that

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129 For the reviews, see Ath, iv (1831), 327-28; Bl, xxx (1831), 350-90; LG, xv (1831), 312; NMM, xxxiii (1831), 156; QR, xliv (1831), 389-414.

130 Collins, 188. Apparently, Tegg then cut the price of the volumes far enough to make a popular success of the series.

131 Lytton, England and the English, II.115-16.

132 For the aspirations of the SDUK and others to educate the working-class reader, see Altick, 139-40, and Patrick Brantlinger, The Spirit of Reform: British Literature and Politics, 1832-1867, 20-21, 23-25, 32-33.

the booksellers could sell nothing but 'Revolutionary' newspapers; in the following year, Washington Irving lamented that the people were interested only in 'reform, cholera and Continental revolutions'; while Mary Shelley told John Murray that most writers had been reduced to making their living by journalism.<sup>133</sup> Thomas Dibdin also blamed reform for the diminution of the old passion for books.<sup>134</sup> After the Reform Bill received the Royal Assent on 7 June 1832, the publishing world began to recover, but the public now furthered its preference for prose and information. Poetry was not wanted,<sup>135</sup> but in any case the 1830s was an empty period for good English poetry. Keats, Byron and Shelley were dead, Coleridge was moribund, and Wordsworth had already written his best poetry. Tennyson and Browning had published some of their work, but went virtually unnoticed until after 1840. The magazines still published poems, but so uninspired were they that a reviewer of a book of translations from the Greek Anthology in 1833 found the translations infinitely preferable to the 'eternal sameness' of modern verse.<sup>136</sup>

This remark provides the final clue. In the early 1830s publishers were reluctant to risk publishing new poetry, while at the same time there were no established poets, currently enjoying a high reputation, whom youthful or second-rate poets might wish to imitate. The only channel for poetry was the magazines — but what to write? The troubled political atmosphere caused many

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133 Collins, 259-61.

134 Dibdin, Bibliophobia, 15, 27, 29, 33, 43.

135 Collins, 262.

136 BC, 4th s., xiv (1833), 426.



people, both writers and readers, to look backwards for a suitable mental refuge. By immersing themselves in ancient literature, they might temporarily forget the present; and for the would-be poets the prospect of translation provided a welcome support for their uncertain talent, since the original effort of creation had already been made for them. Then, again, the publishing of translations must have had considerable attractions for the editors of the literary magazines, who should normally be playing their part as patrons by publishing new poetry. If they were reluctant to publish inferior new poetry, they could salve whatever conscience they had by publishing new translations instead. Moreover, there was every chance that more readers would be attracted by new translations of Greek literature than by new poetry at this time, simply because of the way in which Greek literature had been increasingly brought to their attention as the nineteenth century advanced. The great growth in the reading public since 1800 resulted in a demand for material which did not require deep study, and at the same time the 'march of intellect' called for the diffusion of already existing knowledge in a simplified form for quick digestion.<sup>137</sup> The periodicals were therefore reflecting public demand<sup>138</sup> rather than seeking, as a specific policy of their own, to educate their readers when they chose to print popular surveys of, and selections from, the Greek

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137 See Lytton, England and the English, II.115-21 for a long discussion of the impact of increasing literacy on the publishing market.

138 See Lytton, England and the English, II.14-15. Lytton suggests that the most popular periodicals reflect public opinion, rather than form it, and that their popularity comes because people like to read what they already believe, rather than learn new ideas. There is much truth in what he says.

tragic poets. Lytton illustrated this point with an anecdote about a scientist whose work of serious research was rejected by a publisher because the principles on which it was based were known to a mere handful of men. Instead, the publisher urged the scientist to write a book which would teach the basic principles of his science to the thousands who were familiar with the elements of the subject and were anxious to learn more.<sup>139</sup>

As with science, so with poetry. As far as it is possible to offer any satisfactory explanation, this must be why Blackwood's and Fraser's, the two leading literary magazines of the day, began in 1830 and 1831 to publish translations of Greek poetry, and why they took the extraordinary step of publishing translations of whole plays. Of the separately published translations, it is striking that most are published in and around 1832, and that the two plays most popular with translators are the Prometheus and Agamemnon, which are concerned respectively with the individual's fight against tyranny and the fall of a despot — attractive subjects at a time of political reform.

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139 Lytton, England and the English, II.116-18. For a similar view by a recent writer, see Chilcott, 75.

## CHAPTER 7. THEORY OF TRANSLATION, 1800-1840

Poesie is of so subtle a spirit that in the pouring out of one language into another it will all evaporate, and if a new spirit is not added in the transfusion there will remain nothing but a caput mortuum.

John Denham, Preface to The Destruction of Troy.

### A. The Neoclassical Heritage

No proper understanding of the theory of translation in the early nineteenth century is possible without a knowledge of Dryden's writings on the subject, because his theory was so comprehensive and his critical terms so generally applicable that he was still the major influence on the theory in the Romantic period, and most of his general principles would still find acceptance today. His first and fullest essay in the field of translation theory appeared in his Preface to Ovid's Epistles (1680), and he returns to the subject in later prefaces, making no radical alterations, but merely elaborating one or another point of his theory.<sup>1</sup> In outline, his theory has four main points. Firstly, there are three kinds of translation: a) metaphrase, or close translation word by word and line by line; b) paraphrase, or 'translation with latitude', in which the sense is more strictly followed than the actual words; c) imitation, or translation in which the translator freely adds his own ideas to the original.

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<sup>1</sup> The relevant material will be found in John Dryden, Of Dramatic Poesy and Other Critical Essays, ed. George Watson, I.268-73; II.18-33, 152-55, 163-68, 236-54, 270-89.

Secondly, a translator should be both a good poet and well versed in the two languages with which he is concerned. Thirdly, a translator must do his utmost to transfuse the general character of the original author. Finally, the nature of the translation depends on the audience for which it is intended.<sup>2</sup> Dryden regarded paraphrase as the best kind of translation, because it was as close as one could get to the original author, while at the same time successfully translating idioms and metaphors, and because too free a rendering did not do justice to the original. However, the practical difficulties of translation forced him to interpret paraphrase rather freely, and concede that the translator might suppress those passages which 'would not appear so shining in the English', and add what he thought was 'secretly in the poet, or may be fairly deduced from him'.<sup>3</sup>

Dryden's theory is a logical extension of English neoclassical criticism, which, although accepting that there were certain formal rules, nevertheless stressed that a writer must not be unduly constricted by them.<sup>4</sup> However, there were dangers in its application. After the Preface to Ovid's Epistles, Dryden made no further mention of imitation, which he seemed to think was so far removed from the business of translation that it had no relevance to his argument. By thus removing any identifiable restrictions on 'latitude', Dryden left the way open for subsequent translators to translate with ever-increasing freedom, and this seems to have been exactly what happened. Such was the gulf of incomprehension

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2 Dryden, I.268-73; II.153.

3 Dryden, II.19. Compare II.152, 215 and 246.

4 Irene Simon, ed., Neo-Classical Criticism, 1660-1800, 17.

between eighteenth-century readers and classical poetry that translators felt obliged to re-shape and re-interpret their originals in order to make them acceptable. This meant that eighteenth-century translations were almost invariably written in rhyming couplets, and translated what might be described as the 'general ideas' of the original, without attempting closeness in language or imagery.<sup>5</sup> Dissenters to this practice were few, although more frequent towards the end of the century. Cowper, for instance, criticised Pope for taking liberties with Homer, and claimed that his own blank-verse translation of the Iliad was more 'faithful' because he had 'omitted nothing' and 'invented nothing'.<sup>6</sup> Even so, the popularity of Pope's translation continued unabated.

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, Alexander Fraser Tytler (1747-1814) published his Essay on the Principles of Translation. Tytler was not a man of any great intellectual profundity. According to Lord Cockburn, he 'was unquestionably a person of correct taste, a cultivated mind and literary habits. . . but there is no kindness in insinuating that he was a man of genius. . . or in describing Woodhouselee as Tusculum.'<sup>7</sup> It is this very lack of intellectual originality that gives Tytler's Essay its special value, since he was voicing the most commonly accepted critical opinions of his time. The first edition appeared as a slim volume in 1791, and had enough success for Tytler to produce two more editions in 1797 and 1813, each new edition being larger than the one before, with more numerous and

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5 See Draper, 247.

6 William Cowper, The Iliad of Homer (second edition), xxi-xxxv.

7 Henry Cockburn, Memorials of his Time, 276.



more elaborately argued examples each time.<sup>8</sup>

The essential points in Tytler's theory are stated in the first chapter of the Essay, and the remaining chapters consist of an extended illustration of these points. Tytler begins by saying that the existence of two widely differing opinions on translation (close line-for-line, phrase-for-phrase translation on the one hand, and free translation of 'sense and spirit' with embellishments on the other) suggests that the point of perfection lies midway between. He therefore describes a good translation as 'that, in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language, as to be as distinctly apprehended, and as strongly felt, by a native of the country to which that language belongs, as it is by those who speak the language of the original work.' From this he deduces three 'laws':

1. 'That the Translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work';
2. 'That the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original';
3. 'That the Translation should have all the ease of original composition'.<sup>9</sup>

There are a number of interesting points here. First of all, Tytler accepts the optimistic neoclassical belief that it is scientifically possible to formulate laws governing an art-form by deduction from current practice and opinion. He does admit

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8 All references to Tytler's Essay will be to the third (1813) edition, which presents Tytler's opinions in their final form. The 'Everyman' edition of the Essay (1907) is for some reason a reprint of the second edition of 1797.

9 Tytler, 14-16.

that absolute certainty is impossible in matters of 'Taste',<sup>10</sup> but this is only a preliminary remark, which finds no place at all in the general body of his Essay. Secondly, comparison with the outline of Dryden's theory on page 197-98 above will show general agreement: like Dryden, he finds the best translation to lie midway between free and literal translation; believes that reproduction of the ideas (or 'sense') and style of the original is more important than reproduction of the actual words; and sets great store by ease of composition.<sup>11</sup>

But the third point is the most interesting, for it shows a significant shift in attitude. Dryden had said in A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire (1693) that he and his collaborators had 'endeavoured to make Juvenal speak that kind of English which he would have spoken had he lived in England and had written to this age'.<sup>12</sup> Dryden subscribes to the idea that Good Taste is the same in all ages and in all countries. Tytler's description of a 'good translation', on the contrary, shows a new awareness that emotional response to works of art may differ as time and distance from the original increase, and that reproduction of the subjective qualities of the original is as important in translation as copying the objective externals of form and style. There is nothing new in the consideration of the effect of a poem on the audience per se: it was standard neoclassical doctrine that the purpose of a poem is to give

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10 Tytler, 11.

11 See especially Dryden, II.215.

12 Dryden, II.155.

pleasure to the audience.<sup>13</sup> What is new is the awareness that the audience then differed from the audience now, and that the effect on the audiences may differ. As far as I have yet been able to ascertain, this particular principle is first formulated here by Tytler, although there are signs that he was not its begetter.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, it is so surrounded by the old neoclassical ideas that its novelty is rendered virtually invisible.

Critical opinion on the Essay when it first appeared in 1791 was generally favourable. The Monthly Review welcomed Tytler's 'critical investigation' of the principles of translation as a major step towards the perfection of translation as an art.<sup>15</sup> The European Magazine praised 'the justness of his judgment and the elegance of his taste',<sup>16</sup> and quoted lengthy extracts with silent approval. Twenty years later, though, critical opinions were showing signs of change. The only review of the third (1813) edition appeared in the Eclectic Review.<sup>17</sup> The anonymous reviewer claimed to be surprised but gratified that his own opinions on translation, which he had given a few years earlier in a review of Howes's translation of Persius' Satires, coincided so exactly with those of Tytler, whose book he says had previously been unknown to him. 'A good translation, according to our notion of the matter,' he had said then, 'comprises three things; — the precise sense of the author, without addition, abridgement, or alteration, — given

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13 See Dryden, II.153; Simon, 34-35; M.H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp, 20-21.

14 See T.R. Steiner, 56-60.

15 MR, viii (1792), 361-66. Quotation from p. 361.

16 EM, xxiv (1793), 186-89, 278-82. Quotation from p. 281.

17 EcR, ix<sup>2</sup> (1813), 492-97.

in his own manner, — yet with the air of an original.'<sup>18</sup> Despite this remarkable coincidence of opinion — or perhaps because of it — the review of Tytler's Essay was scornful of attempts to draw up rules for any kind of literary composition.<sup>19</sup> He therefore did not think that Tytler's work would produce better translations. He also attacked Tytler for allowing too much latitude to the translator; complained that Tytler's examples did not in fact give a very good idea of the manner of their originals; and disagreed with Tytler's rule that an air of originality is to be sacrificed if it means departure from the matter and manner of the original.<sup>20</sup> Another writer on translation, Charles Elton, found fault with Tytler's constant use of Pope's Homer as the best kind of translation, and his exhortations to 'improve' those passages in which the author has supposedly fallen beneath himself. 'Taste', said Elton, 'is a capricious and variable standard: the fit standard of a translator is fidelity.'<sup>21</sup> A desire for greater fidelity, and with it an awareness of the differences in taste wrought by the passing of time, are two of the main contributions of the Romantic period to the theory of translation.

#### B. Theory of Translation in the Romantic Period

The qualities of the translator come under more scrutiny after 1800 than in the eighteenth century, when Dryden's stipulation of a good knowledge of both languages, and especially a mastery of

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18 EcR, v<sup>2</sup> (1809), 794.

19 EcR, ix<sup>2</sup> (1813), 492.

20 EcR, ix<sup>2</sup> (1813), 493-97.

21 Charles A. Elton, Specimens of the Classic Poets, I.xviii-xxi

the translator's mother-tongue, were all that were necessary. Now, a talent resembling that of Keats's 'camelion poet' is called for. John Eyre, writing on Thomas Moore's translation of Anacreon in the Edinburgh Review, demanded from his ideal translator an ability both to interpret the 'ideas and sentiments of remote periods', and to communicate the poet's 'delicate forms of thought'. Such a translator, said Eyre, would possess 'either analogous genius, or that happy versatility of mind, which readily conceives and assimilates the various modifications of human character'.<sup>22</sup> A later writer in the Monthly Review agreed. 'The translator should be but a passive agent of communication. He should reflect the impressions of another, and not give his own — when once he violates the reserve of his neutral character, he only imitates the treachery of the confidant who turns principal to the detriment of the person whom he professes to serve.'<sup>23</sup> Such talent, with the translator as passive transmitter of inspiration, was close to the heart of Romantic theory. Unfortunately this ideal translator, even more than Dryden's ideal translator, was likely to share the Romantic scorn of imitators and prefer original composition. This is why poet-translators of the stature of Dryden and Pope do not appear in the early nineteenth century.

The argument was still between two kinds of translation, which Elton, echoing Dryden, referred to as 'verbal metaphrase' and 'paraphrastical licence'.<sup>24</sup> Frere's description of 'faithful' and

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22 ER, ii (1803), 465-66.

23 MR, 1831, vol. ii, 97.

24 C.A. Elton, I.xv.



'spirited' translators is new only in the terms used. His 'Faithful Translator' is one who 'renders into English all the conversational phrases according to their grammatical and logical form, without any reference to the current usage which had affixed to them an arbitrary sense and appropriated them to a particular and definite purpose.' His 'Spirited Translator', on the other hand, translates into the appropriate modern equivalent, but overdoes it by using phrases which have a connection with modern manners only, and thus creates confusion.<sup>25</sup> Arguments for and against one kind of translation or the other seem in the main to be seeking some common middle ground.<sup>26</sup>

After 1800 there was a growing demand for closer translation. In 1810 the Monthly Review remarked upon the 'hypercritical spirit of our times' which scrutinised virtually every word and image in a translation for accuracy, unlike the less fastidious readers of Dryden's age.<sup>27</sup> In the Edinburgh Review John Williams insisted that 'the entire and naked sense of the original, though stripped of the gorgeous apparel in which it is clothed, must. . . be perfectly given, or nothing is done at all.'<sup>28</sup> However, the advocates of literal translation were not in favour of word-for-word translation in its extremest form; indeed, they were aware that such translations were worthless, because they would leave idioms and figurative language unintelligible. Thomas Doubleday

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25 QR, xxiii (1820), 481-82.

26 See BC, xvi (1800), 655-61 for a skilful and sympathetic analysis of the difficulty the translator has in keeping to the middle ground.

27 MR, lxi (1810), 1.

28 ER, xlvi (1828), 418.

made a rousing attack on the pedants who demanded exact translations and then complained of their inadequacy. It was, he said, the insistence on keeping antique and unfamiliar idiom that was responsible for the failure of Macpherson's *Ossian* and Cowper's *Homer*. A true literal translation would not put alien idioms in English, but would try to imagine how Horace or Tibullus would write if they were alive now, and translate accordingly.<sup>29</sup> J.S. Harford agreed: if 'mere learning' was enough, every scholar should be able to produce a good translation, but such close translation did not do justice to 'flashes of airy fancy and impassioned feeling'.<sup>30</sup>

Critics of paraphrase usually attacked it for producing diffuse and inaccurate versions of image and poetic style. In 1806 the Eclectic Review observed that in poetry, concepts could be translated, but poetic talent and techniques could at best be imitated.<sup>31</sup> Doubleday agreed: 'The paraphrastical versions of the classics are but bad paraphrases', because it was next to impossible to paraphrase idioms and metaphors in order to bring out all the connotations of meaning.<sup>32</sup> Contemporary taste was still responsible for the badness of paraphrases, according to the Quarterly Review: a translator 'sometimes will neglect or soften an image unsuited to modern associations; sometimes qualify or refine expressions which are too harsh and far fetched.'<sup>33</sup> Those who defended paraphrase did not defend the habit of taking

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29 Bl, xiii (1823), 542-43.

30 Harford, ix.

31 EcR, ii<sup>2</sup> (1806), 604.

32 Bl, xiii (1823), 543.

33 QR, x (1813-14), 146.

tremendous liberties with the text, but rather relied on the old argument of Denham that the translator had in some way to replace the subtle spirit lost in the process of translation. As Henry Hallam put it in the Quarterly Review. 'In all translations, to represent the original character is the first duty. But he who must lose much of the precision and gracefulness of language, and even the collocation of words, is no more to be blamed for replacing them by new graces of his own language, than a musical performer for enriching the text of his composer by touches suggested by his own skill and enthusiasm.'<sup>34</sup> Sir Walter Scott preferred a more macabre image: 'The essential spirit of poetry is so volatile, that it escapes during such an operation, like the life of the poor criminal, whom the ancient anatomist is said to have dissected alive, in order to ascertain the seat of the soul. The carcase indeed is presented to the English reader, but the animating vigour is no more.'<sup>35</sup>

Choice of metre for early nineteenth-century translators was still very much Hobson's choice. Blank verse was permissible only in translating drama.<sup>36</sup> Rhyme was less likely to result in a 'servile' translation.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, blank verse was deceptively easy to write, but difficult to write well.<sup>38</sup> Finally — an argument to silence all dissent — rhyme was more popular: James Pillans in the Quarterly Review compared the popular reception of Pope's and Cowper's translations of Homer, adding that he knew of

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34 QR, xiii (1815), 153.

35 Scott, Life of Dryden, 516.

36 QR, i (1809), 76.

37 QR, xiii (1815), 152.

38 MR, liv (1807), 394-95.

'no blank verse translation of an ancient poet that has become a favourite with the public';<sup>39</sup> the Monthly Review, in an article on Sotheby's translation of Homer, said much the same;<sup>40</sup> Henry Nelson Coleridge reluctantly agreed that the popularity of rhyme made it essential in a translation, despite the difficulties it created;<sup>41</sup> and Wordsworth justified his use of rhyme in his translation of the Aeneid by saying that rhyme was needed to make so remote a subject acceptable to contemporary popular taste.<sup>42</sup>

Only a few voices protested at the tyranny of rhyme at first, but they gained strength from about 1810 onwards. C.A. Elton maintained that blank verse was misunderstood because it was not read properly; and argued that although it was harder to write, and less instantly pleasing to the untuned ear, it was more suitable for translating verse-forms composed in extended periods.<sup>43</sup> This was also Coleridge's opinion when he commended H.F. Cary's use of blank verse to translate Dante's terza rima: blank verse gave the right kind of onward movement.<sup>44</sup> R.A. Willmott rounded off a discussion of translation in Fraser's Magazine in 1836 by saying that while the sense of an author was 'sacred and inviolable', the expression need not be so severely restricted, and the original lines and metre need not be adhered to.<sup>45</sup> Coleridge went even farther. He told Frere in 1816 that 'we shall never feel as

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39 QR, i (1809), 76.

40 MR, 3rd s., xiv (1830), 223-24.

41 QR, li (1834), 25.

42 The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: III, The Later Years, rev. and ed. Alan G. Hill, I.250.

43 C.A. Elton, I.vii-xv.

44 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, IV, 781.

45 FM, xiii (1836), 600-01.

Englishmen what the Iliad really is till we have it translated as a metrical Romance.'<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately, he was dead before Maginn's versions of Homer in ballad stanza appeared in Fraser's Magazine in 1838, and we shall never know if they met his requirements.<sup>47</sup> There were even occasional suggestions that verse might most adequately be translated by prose, since this avoided all the problems of retaining accuracy while maintaining regularity of rhyme and rhythm.<sup>48</sup>

The most vexed question was how to give an air of originality to a translation. Dryden's neoclassical rule that the translator should write as the author would have written, had he lived in England at the present time, still had considerable support. But the growing awareness of the pastness of the past meant that translators were more doubtful about the viability of such a rule. Scott criticised Dryden's hasty habit of using modern imagery to translate a classical phrase, although the poet in Scott made him aware that the general reader would probably enjoy the modern phrase more, and that the 'antique costume' might have to be rejected in order to retain 'that vital spirit and energy, which is the soul of poetry in all languages, and countries, and ages whatsoever'.<sup>49</sup> The Monthly Review put this habit down to 'indolence' on the part of the translator, who was too ready to resort to 'a maxim very capable, at first sight, of captivating

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46 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, IV.655. Coleridge also visualised a translation of Christabel into Greek, using one of the choral metres from Prometheus Vincetus. See The Notebooks of S.T. Coleridge, ed. K.C. Coburn, II.2900.

47 See Chapter 5, p. 147.

48 See especially, Ath, ii (1829), 467, 801-02, 811-12.

49 Scott, Life of Dryden, 513-15.



the ear, but which the slightest examination will discover to be void of any determinate meaning'.<sup>50</sup>

Awareness of the problem brought no final solution. Some, like H.F. Cary, preferred to retain antique expressions. When Anna Seward criticised Cary for doing so, he replied that Dante, like a Gothic cathedral, would be spoiled by modernisation.<sup>51</sup> Doubleday thought this method silly, since the reader would be perplexed by foreign idiom in English dress. 'Like the Kremlin at Brighton, or the Parthenon on the Calton Hill, the superstructure is still outlandish, though the bricks and mortar are English.' He realised that in translating idiomatic expressions, some of the verbal connotations would be lost, and that complex image-clusters in poetry may be translated so as to preserve the main meaning, but at the expense of associated meanings.<sup>52</sup> A writer in the Eclectic Review pointed out an allied difficulty in the translation of drama: all we have is the bare text of the play, whereas the playwright was calculating on the overall effect of costume, props, movements, etc., some of which were peculiar to Greek drama, and which might cause difficulty to readers unfamiliar with them.<sup>53</sup>

One of the few who did offer a solution was Frere, who explained his approach to Aristophanes in his article on Mitchell's translations.<sup>54</sup> Frere's 'lawful and true' translator would seek a translation which gave the general sense of the phrase or idiom concerned, so that the reader should not be constantly aware that

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50 MR, lv (1808), 249.

51 Cary, I.236-39.

52 Bl, xiii (1823), 543.

53 EcR, n.s., xxii (1824), 218.

54 'Mitchell's Translation of Aristophanes', QR, xxiii (1820), 474-510.

he was reading a translation, but should at the same time be given an idea of the general spirit of the original. He took an example from the Frogs to illustrate his point:

λοιδορεῖσθαι δ' οὐ πρέπει  
ἄνδρας ποητάς ὥς περ ἄρτοπώλιδας (Ar. Ran. 857-58).

The literal translator would translate this as

it ill beseems  
Illustrious bards to scold like bakers' wives,

and add a learned footnote, with various supporting references, to show that Athenian bakers' wives 'were addicted to scolding above their fellows'. The spirited translator would look for a modern equivalent, and put 'to scold like oyster wenches'. But the lawful and true translator, being aware from the breadth of his reading and personal experience that all sellers of goods in the open market-place partake of 'a spirit of objurgatory altercation', would conclude that 'the race of Market Scolds are a permanent and imperishable species', and therefore translate by the general term 'hucksters' or 'market women'.<sup>55</sup> A satisfactory solution, but one which Frere was the first to admit was not universally applicable. He found it suitable for Aristophanes, because (apart from the localised and individual allusions) what Aristophanes says has value and relevance for all ages. With the infuriatingly easy air of the dilettante, Frere happily admitted that the localised allusions were often untranslatable, and that was that.<sup>56</sup>

Most of the writers so far mentioned, when their identities are known at all, are mere reflectors of public taste rather than

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55 QR, xxiii (1820), 482-83. In his own translation of the Frogs, Frere used the phrase 'market women'. See Bl, iv (1818-19), 426.

56 QR, xxiii (1820), 484.

great figures of literary importance. Shelley and Wordsworth both translated from the classics, and Coleridge translated mainly from German. If any new ideas on the art of translation are to be found, they must surely be sought in the opinions expressed by these three innovators.

The few remarks Shelley made on the subject of translation are rather pessimistic. He had little time for pedantry, and was sceptical of the value of dictionaries and grammars in relentlessly tracking down meanings.<sup>57</sup> In reply to Hogg's exhortation that he use Scapula's Greek lexicon, he suggested that using a lexicon might make him 'lose the end while busied about the means; and exchange the embraces of a living and tangible Calypso for the image of a Penelope, who, though wise, can never again be young.'<sup>58</sup> He told Medwin that it was the greatest mistake to suppose that knowledge of a language was all a translator needed. The translator had to be as great a poet as his original, if he was to do justice to him.<sup>59</sup> Timothy Webb traces the influence of Platonism on Shelley's thoughts on translation. The visible world is the imitation of the real world. Art, which imitates the real world, is the imitation of an imitation. Translation, which imitates the artefact, is even further removed from reality.<sup>60</sup> This was what Shelley meant when he talked of the Greek plays tempting him 'to throw over their perfect and glowing forms the grey veil of my own words'.<sup>61</sup>

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57 Webb, 16-22.

58 Letters of P.B. Shelley, I.569.

59 Medwin, Life of Shelley, 385.

60 Webb, 27-28.

61 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.153.

The more he tried translation himself, the more pessimistic he became. 'What is a translation of Homer into English?' he asked. 'A person who is ignorant of Greek need only look at "Paradise Lost", or the tragedy of "Lear" translated into French, to obtain an analogical conception of its worthless and miserable inadequacy.'<sup>62</sup> He was pleasantly surprised to find that Leigh Hunt's translation of Tasso's Amyntas almost reconciled him to translations, although he had earlier told Hunt he would have been better employed on original poetic composition.<sup>63</sup> Shelley's practical approach to translation was fairly liberal. Webb's analysis of his method shows that — apart from times when an inaccurate translation is due to a mistake in interpretation — Shelley often deliberately adapted the original to develop an idea of his own, romanticised the language of the original, or explicitly defined background or emotions which the original merely implied.<sup>64</sup> This means that in practice he was following Dryden. Run-of-the mill critics might insist on literalness, but (as Webb points out) Shelley realised that a good translation must be a fresh work of art: a Pope or a Chapman was always preferable to a Cary or a Cowper.

Wordsworth also tried his hand at translation, and was equally discouraged by his efforts. He seems to have embarked on his translation because of his low opinion of Dryden as a translator. Dryden, he said, 'read the passage he wished to render, until he took in the full and entire meaning of the author, then

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62 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.277.

63 Letters of P.B. Shelley, II.152, 345.

64 Webb, 98-116.

threw aside the original, and expressed the thought in his own happy and truly English phraseology.<sup>65</sup> Wordsworth tried to make his own translation of Aeneid I-III more literal, and soon found how impossibly difficult this was, particularly since he had chosen to write it in rhyming couplets. In a letter to Lord Lonsdale (23 January 1824), he observed that the closer a translator tried to keep to the original, the harder his task would be. 'A literal Translation of an antient Poet in verse, and particularly in rhyme, is impossible; something must be left out and something added.'<sup>66</sup> In a later letter (5 February 1824) he said he thought a translation could not be too literal, as long as it avoided 'baldness', 'strangeness', and 'attempts to convey meaning. . . by languid circumlocution'.<sup>67</sup> In other words, he preferred the middle path whenever possible, although he wryly admitted that, had he translated as freely as Dryden, he could have translated nine books with the labour he had expended on three.<sup>68</sup>

He sent the translation to Coleridge for his comments. After retrieving the translation from the sideboard drawer in a friend's house, where he had left it behind,<sup>69</sup> Coleridge wrote back to Wordsworth on 12 April 1824: 'My conviction is, that you undertake an impossibility, and that there is no medium between a prose version and one on the avowed principle of compensation in the widest sense, that is, manner, genius, total effect.'<sup>70</sup> Such a

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65 John Payne Collier, An Old Man's Diary, Forty Years Ago, I.90 (quoted in Letters of Wordsworth: Later Years, I.228n<sup>6</sup>).

66 Letters of Wordsworth: Later Years, I.247.

67 Letters of Wordsworth: Later Years, I.250.

68 Letters of Wordsworth: Later Years, I.252.

69 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, V.347.

70 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, V.353-54.



crushing verdict stopped Wordsworth from going any further. His last words in the matter, in a letter to the Philological Museum in 1832, show that Coleridge's words are still ringing in his ears: 'Having been displeased in modern translations with the additions of incongruous matter, I began to translate with a resolve to keep clear of that fault, by adding nothing; but I became convinced that a spirited translation can scarcely be accomplished in the English language without admitting a principle of compensation.'<sup>71</sup>

Two things are clear from this account of Wordsworth's translation from the Aeneid: that Wordsworth had not elaborated any theory of his own, and that he respected Coleridge's judgement in such matters. Coleridge's letter of 12 April 1824 suggests that by this time he had given some thought to the theory of translation. Unfortunately, he has left nothing of any real length, published or otherwise, on the subject, but it is possible to reconstruct Coleridge's theory of translation with a certain degree of confidence.

His earliest remarks on translation are in his preface to the first edition of The Death of Wallenstein (1800), which closes with these words:

Translation of poetry into poetry is difficult, because the translator must give a brilliancy to his language without that warmth of original conception, from which such brilliancy would follow of its own accord. But the translator of a living Author is encumbered with additional inconveniences. If he render his original faithfully, as to the sense of each passage, he must necessarily destroy a considerable portion of the spirit; if he endeavour

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71 Quoted in The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, ed. Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire, IV.470. The Philological Museum printed Wordsworth's translation of Aeneid II. 657-end in 1832. See PhM, i (1832), 382-86.

to give a work executed according to laws of compensation, he subjects himself to imputations of vanity, or misrepresentation.<sup>72</sup>

Apart from the term 'compensation', this statement is unoriginal and suggests that he was familiar with neoclassical theories, but had not yet formulated his own. Dryden's influence is also seen in a letter Coleridge sent to Sara Hutchinson in 1808, in which he told her that Chapman's Odyssey would give her a better idea of Homer than the versions of Pope and Cowper, because Chapman wrote 'as Homer might have written had he lived in England and in the reign of Queen Elizabeth'.<sup>73</sup>

It was not until about 1816, when he became friendly with Frere, that Coleridge gave serious and sustained thought to translation theory. His references to translation in his letters after this time make use of three phrases: 'imitation', 'alter et idem' and 'theory of compensation and equivalence of effect'. At no time does he offer an explanation of these phrases, and it must be assumed that the recipients of his letters had heard him discourse at greater length on the subject on some previous occasion.

Coleridge regularly used 'imitation' to refer to Frere's verse translations.<sup>74</sup> What he meant by this term, as applied to translation, was much the same as Dryden's 'paraphrase', just as his term 'copy' approximated to Dryden's 'metaphrase'. Coleridge himself provided the clue to this in a letter of 2 July 1816, in

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72 The Complete Poetical Works of S.T. Coleridge, ed. E.H. Coleridge, II.725.

73 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, III.67-68.

74 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, IV.647; V.93. See also The Friend, ed. Barbara E. Rooke, I.18.

which he substantiated his praise of Frere's 'imitations' by referring Frere to the first two chapters of the second volume of Biographia Literaria (Chapters XIV-XV), the proof sheets of which he enclosed with his letter. Frere would have found the most relevant passage in Coleridge's definition of the poet's power, which 'reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects'.<sup>75</sup> This definition, which Fruman traces to Schelling's definition of art as 'harmony of the subjective and objective',<sup>76</sup> has an obvious application to translation, since the translator's problem is how to give an exact rendering of the original, while also adding enough of himself to ensure that the translation lives as a work of art in its own right.

The principle of reconciliation of opposites was directly linked with 'imitation' in Coleridge's essay 'On Poesy or Art', which Shawcross dates as no earlier than 1818, and which might therefore reflect something of Coleridge's conversations with Frere, as well as his reading of Schelling:

In all imitation two elements must coexist, and not only coexist, but must be perceived as coexisting. These two constituent elements are likeness and unlikeness, or sameness and difference, and in all genuine creations of art there must be a union of these disparates. The artist may take his point of view where he pleases, provided that the desired effect be perceptibly produced, — that there be likeness in the difference, difference in the likeness, and a

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75 Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, II.12.

76 Norman Fruman, Coleridge, the Damaged Archangel, 184-88.

reconcilement of both in one.<sup>77</sup>

Frere's theory of translation, expressed in his article reviewing Mitchell's translations from Aristophanes, shows clear links with Coleridge's theory. Frere believed that 'the object of poetic and dramatic art' was to show people their faults, but in such a way that the author does not seem to be directly criticising anyone. This was to be achieved by a mixture of truth and unreality:

Either the persons must be obviously fictitious, as in fable, or the events must be impossible, as in the Aristophanic comedy; or supposing the events to be combined with probability, the language and sentiments must be removed from the reality of ordinary life, as is the case in tragedy, and (to a certain degree) in our own old regular comedy of the seventeenth century, the comedy of Jonson and Fletcher. Thus, absolute Reality is to be avoided as too directly offensive; but absolute Unreality is equally objectionable; it is vague, feeble, and applies to nothing. The two opposites must be combined. Where the events are coherent and possible, the language must be ideal — Where the fiction is wild and extravagant, its extravagance must be compensated by a reality in the language.<sup>78</sup>

The idea of combined 'sameness and difference' is repeated in Coleridge's Latin phrase 'alter et idem', which he twice applied to translations he was praising: in 1816 he described Voss's German translations of Homer and Virgil as 'truly marvellous Translations — alter et idem'; and in 1827 he told Sotheby that his translation of Virgil's Georgics was 'the best Translation of any Work that exists in our Language and the nearest to the ideal Alter et Idem'.<sup>79</sup> Coleridge's adoption of a Latin phrase is

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77 Biographia Literaria, II.256. For earlier examples of this distinction of 'imitation' and 'copy', see Notebooks of S.T. Coleridge, II.2211, 2274; CSC, I.181, 197; II.53, 123.

78 QR, xxiii (1820), 478-79.

79 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, IV.655; VI.692.



curious and seems to derive from his interest in metaphysics. He apparently first used the phrase in a letter dated 14 April 1816 in which he referred to 'a Deus alter et idem' as the primal creative force in the metaphysical universe of Plato and Philo Judaeus, upon which all things are modelled. He then stressed the application of the term Εἰκών ('likeness') to this creative force, as distinct from the terms Εἶδωλον and Ἰδέα ('phantom' and 'outward appearance') which apply respectively to corporeal and mental copies.<sup>80</sup> It is significant that this letter was written at about the same time as he became acquainted with Frere.

In his letter to Sotheby, Coleridge also referred to 'the only two legitimate kinds of poetic translation' which carried 'the transfusion of the Spirit and Individuality of a Poet, each in it's kind, to the highest point of perfection'. These two kinds of translation are mentioned again in another letter to Sotheby, in which Coleridge described his plans for an article on Sotheby's Georgics to be contributed to Blanco White's London Review, which would include 'the question of metres, and the two modes of translation, the identical and the equivalent'.<sup>81</sup> Coleridge is clearly thinking of translation in accordance with Dryden's definition (identical = idem = metaphrase; equivalent = alter = paraphrase), and like Dryden, visualises the best translation as a combination of the two.

Coleridge had a lifelong interest in prosody, and the idea that it might be possible to adapt classical metres in order to extend and enrich English versification may be traced in numerous

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80 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, IV.632-33.

81 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, VI.771.



notebook entries.<sup>82</sup> The phrase 'compensation and equivalence of effect', which does not seem to pre-date his acquaintance with Frere,<sup>83</sup> is at least partly concerned with metrical equivalence. Coleridge first used it in his letter to Murray in August 1820, in which he said he and his son Hartley had been working on an essay on 'Metre, Metres, & [the] possibility of transferring, by compensation & equivalence of effect, the measures of the Greek Dramatists to the English Language'. This essay he proposed to offer to the Quarterly Review as a review of Frere's 'Aristophanics', should they ever be published.<sup>84</sup>

In some form or other, it was apparently still lying around years later, to be rewritten as the review of Sotheby's Georgics mentioned above (p. 219), for Coleridge told Sotheby on 13 July 1829 that he soon hoped to 'have brought together as a part of my Critique some remarks on translation on the principle of Compensation, proportional to the differences in the Genius of the two Languages'.<sup>85</sup> Unfortunately, the London Review was short-lived, and Coleridge's essay (if, indeed, it had progressed any further than a few notes on paper and some ideas in Coleridge's head), was never published.<sup>86</sup> His only other reference to this particular theory, in his letter to Wordsworth (p. 214), suggests a wider application of the principle. If it is to be applied to

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82 See, for example, Notebooks of S.T. Coleridge, I.372-73; II. 2835 and note.

83 The simpler term 'compensation' used in the preface to The Death of Wallenstein does not have the same complexity of implication.

84 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, V.93.

85 Letters of S.T. Coleridge, VI.798.

86 Coleridge's notes on metre in BL Egerton MS 2800, ff. 54-57, might be the remarks in question, although they are very general in character.

'manner, genius, total effect', this principle is simply a restatement of the principle of 'sameness and difference' in an imitation.

At first sight, Coleridge's theory seems to be nothing other than Dryden's theory cloaked in Coleridgean abstraction, and Pope's line from the Dunciad,

Old in new state; another yet the same,<sup>87</sup>

might be taken as fair comment. There is much truth in this, but I would argue that Coleridge's real innovation is in the phrase 'equivalence of effect', which is closely related to the new awareness that literary taste changes with the centuries. More than this, it shows that Coleridge's own thinking on translation had taken a large step forward from the time of his letter to Sara Hutchinson in 1808 (p. 216). By 1820, when his use of the phrase 'equivalence of effect' is first recorded, Coleridge had come to believe that a translation of poetry should have an effect on its audience as similar as possible to the effect of the original poem on the original audience. It is hard to say whether this represents an inspiration coming from Coleridge himself. I am inclined to think that Coleridge, as so often, was taking ideas floating in the critical air of his time and transmuting them into fully articulated theories. There is, for example, some remarkably similar phraseology in an article by Charles Elton in the London Magazine in January 1822, where Elton discusses the choice of metre in translation:

There will seldom be found a deficiency in any language without a compensation: that if a language has not the

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87 Pope, Dunciad (1728), III.32.

same laws of harmony as another, the laws peculiar to itself will supply the same resources and operate the same effects, in relation to the ear native to that language, as are arbitrarily and unphilosophically thought to depend on the adoption of particular and exclusive means.<sup>88</sup>

Thirteen years later a writer in Fraser's Magazine (possibly Maginn) stated that a translation should represent what the original author would have written in English, had he suddenly acquired the ability to do so, but retaining the 'mode of thought' typical of his own time and society.<sup>89</sup> It is a great pity that Coleridge was never constrained to put his thoughts on translation into permanent form, for Matthew Arnold would not then have been regarded as the originator of the idea that a translator should evoke in the reader feelings similar to those evoked by the original author.<sup>90</sup>

It was the attempts to provide some kind of equivalence of effect that caused many translators to voice their despair. Thomas Mitchell, translator of Aristophanes, encapsulated the general feeling: 'To think that the Greek language in general, or the language of Aristophanes in particular, is to be known by translation, is to creep down to Margate in a steam-boat, and return with an idea that we have seen the wonders of the deep.'<sup>91</sup> Their principal difficulty was in finding adequate equivalents for idioms and modes of thought. In writing about Wordsworth in Biographia Literaria, Coleridge had talked about the

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88 LM, v (1822), 44.

89 FM, xi (1835), 621-22.

90 See 'On Translating Homer', The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold, ed. R.H. Super, I.98-99.

91 QR, xxxiii (1825-26), 356.

'untranslatableness' of the best poetry in words of the same language, 'for language is framed to convey not the object alone, but likewise the character, mood and intentions of the person who is representing it.'<sup>92</sup> Doubleday developed this point by saying that no-one could translate Wordsworth into another language because of his complexity of image and metaphor. Then, turning to the problem of translating from the classics, he showed that the difficulty there was even greater, because the ideas underlying ancient image and metaphor were no longer fully understood: 'We may seize and retain the principal idea, but the lesser ideas, which serve to express the greater, we cannot preserve.'<sup>93</sup>

The mixture of old and new in the translation theory of the early nineteenth century is an indication that this was a period of transition. We should not therefore be surprised to find a similar mixture of techniques employed by the translators themselves, although in general terms there should be a gradual progress from eighteenth-century paraphrase towards closer translations seeking to represent the actual words and thoughts of the original authors more correctly than before.

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92 Biographia Literaria, II.115-16.

93 Bl, xiii (1823), 543.

CHAPTER 8. THE VERSE TRANSLATIONS: SLUGGISH BEGINNINGS,  
1800-1818

There is no necessity for fighting the battles of Homer o'er again, but we should rejoice to see them rival the success of Pope in versions of the Greek tragedians.

EcR, xiv (1811), 716.

In the first decade of the nineteenth century, there seems to have been little demand for new translations of Greek tragedy. The translations of Potter, Francklin and Wodhull were still available, and regularly reprinted until the 1820s, when they too were affected by the general blight in publishing.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, before 1810 there is little indication of any kind of interest in Greek tragedy, apart from three articles in obscure and short-lived magazines,<sup>2</sup> and if there were large numbers of people turning out their own versions of the Greek tragedies, they have covered their tracks remarkably well. The earliest known translation is Peacock's lines, 'Many are the forms of fate', which were apparently written in about 1805, according to Henry Cole, who first published them in 1875;<sup>3</sup> but a consideration of these lines may best be deferred until Peacock's later translations of 1812-1815 are examined.

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1 See Appendix 1.

2 'On Tragedy among the Ancients', Le Beau Monde, iv (1808), 110-13; 'Ancient and Modern Drama Contrasted', Flowers of Literature, vii (1808-09), 146-48; 'Greek and English Tragedy', The Reflector, i (1810), 62-72.

3 See Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.417.



Figure 4 Verse Translations and Translators, 1800-1818

<u>Date</u>	<u>Work or Passage(s)</u> <u>Translated</u>	<u>Translator</u>
[1805	<u>Alc.</u> 1159-63 etc	T.L. Peacock]
1807	<u>PV.</u> 526-36, 552-60 <u>Med.</u> 627-62	Lord Byron
[1810	<u>Med.</u> 1-6	Lord Byron]
1813	'Extracts from the Grecian Drama'	R. Bland, J.H. Merivale, T. Denman
	<u>Phoen.</u> 784-833	R. Morehead
[1812-1815	Nine passages from the tragedians	T.L. Peacock]
1814	<u>Hipp.</u> 732-75	Lord Thurlow
1815	<u>OC.</u> 668-719	H.S. Boyd
	<u>Med.</u> 1028-37	T. Partridge
1817	Passages from Aesch. <u>Cho</u> , <u>PV</u> , <u>Sept</u> ; Eur. <u>Hipp</u> , <u>IA</u> , <u>Pho</u> ; Soph. <u>El</u> , <u>Phil</u>	J.G. Lockhart
	Sophocles, <u>Electra</u>	W. Drennan
1817-1818	Passages from Aesch. <u>Ag</u>	R. Morehead

Note: Items in square brackets were not published during the period in question.

The only person actually to publish translations before 1810 was none other than Byron, who included two translated passages in Hours of Idleness in 1807. The first of these was composed while he was still at Harrow, where he enjoyed reading the Prometheus and Medea.<sup>4</sup> This piece, 'Fragments of School Exercises, from the Prometheus Vinctus of Aeschylus',<sup>5</sup> is a translation of PV. 526-36, 552-60, two extracts from a choral ode in which the Oceanides express the hope that they never do anything to offend Zeus, express alarm at Prometheus' fearlessness, ask what possible help there is for him, and comment on the difference they see between Prometheus' state now and at the happy time of his wedding to Hesione. Byron has taken the first strophe and second antistrophe, and constructed a short poem in two verses about the power of Zeus. It is not a good translation: either Byron is deliberately translating with considerable freedom, or he is trying to conceal the inadequacy of his Greek. For example:

μηδ' ἄλιτοιμι λόγοις·  
ἀλλὰ μοι τόδ' ἐμμένοι καὶ μή ποτ' ἐκτακείη.<sup>6</sup>

in Byron's version becomes:

My voice shall raise no impious strain,  
'Gainst him who rules the sky and azure main. (11.7-8)

As an English poem, it is an unexciting descendant of the eighteenth-century tradition of 'pindaric' odes.

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4 Byron's Letters and Journals, V.268.

5 Byron's Complete Poetical Works, I.75-76. The poem is dated 'Harrow, December 1, 1804'.

6 PV.535-36: 'And may I not offend in speech; but may this rule abide in my heart and never fade away.' (Weir Smyth)  
(In providing close prose translations of all passages cited, I have used Weir Smyth in the Loeb edition for Aeschylus and Jebb for Sophocles, although they are not always satisfactory. For Euripides, where no other translator's name is cited, the translation is my own.)

The second translation, 'Translation from the Medea of Euripides', was written in 1807, and in a footnote Byron admitted that he had taken 'a considerable liberty' with the original.<sup>7</sup> His text is Med. 627-62, a choral ode commenting on the misfortunes of Medea, who has been rejected by her husband Jason. Again, Byron seems to have used the ideas in his Greek text as a point of departure for a poem of his own which is almost twice as long as the passage he claims to be translating. So free is his translation that very little of it can profitably be compared with the original passage. His closest translation is of Med. 643-51:

My native soil! belov'd before,  
 Now dearer as my peaceful home,  
 Ne'er may I quit thy rocky shore,  
 A hapless banish'd wretch to roam;  
 This very day, this very hour,  
 May I resign this fleeting breath,  
 Nor quit my silent humble bower;  
 A doom, to me, far worse than death. (ll. 33-40)<sup>8</sup>

These lines, whose style is typical of the other poems and translations in Hours of Idleness, have all the marks of Augustan diction, particularly in the liking for adjectival phrases (such as 'fleeting breath' and 'silent humble bower') as well as the young poet's lack of originality and feeble rhyming.

Byron's two translations are very much in the eighteenth-century tradition of free paraphrase, as the author himself admitted in his preface,<sup>9</sup> and have to be accepted for what they

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7 Byron's Complete Poetical Works, I.90-92. For Byron's footnote, see I.371.

8 Med. 643-51: 'O home, o native land! Never, never may I become an exile, with an unendurable lifetime of hardship and most piteous suffering. Before then may I be overcome by death — by death — and bring my life to an end. There is no greater hardship on earth than to be deprived of one's homeland.'

9 Byron's Complete Poetical Works, I.33.

are: schoolboy work, done by a man who boasted in later life that he had never opened a Greek book after he left school, and dismissed by his own schoolmaster as worthless.<sup>10</sup> There is one other rather curious fragment by Byron, titled 'Translation of the Nurses's Dole in the Medea of Euripides'. These six lines were not published in Byron's lifetime, but first appeared in a letter written in June 1810.<sup>11</sup> They cannot properly be called a translation, but rather a very free paraphrase, tossed off from memory, of the opening lines of the Medea, done in the jocular Byronic manner so familiar from his letters and ottava rima poems. Only the first two lines of Greek are at all closely translated; the subsequent lines are ever freer as Byron improvises amusing rhymes:

Oh how I wish that an embargo  
Had kept in port the good ship Argo!  
Who, still unlaunch'd from Grecian docks,  
Had never pass'd the Azure rocks;  
But now I fear her trip will be a  
Damn'd business for my Miss Medea, &c. &c.<sup>12</sup>

After Byron's translations, no more were published for some years. Then in 1813, and perhaps partly in reply to the wish of a reviewer in the Eclectic Review that translators would try to 'rival the success of Pope in versions of the Greek tragedians',<sup>13</sup>

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10 Byron's Letters and Journals, IX.43.

11 Byron's Complete Poetical Works, I.284. In a letter from Constantinople to Henry Drury, Byron boasted of having climbed the Cynaeon Symplegades (which are mentioned in Med. 1-2), saying, 'you remember the beginning of the nurse's dole in the Medea, of which I beg you to take the following translation, done on the summit'. (Byron's Letters and Journals, I.245-46) For the subsequent publishing history of these lines, see Byron's Complete Poetical Works, I.423-24.

12 Med. 1-2: 'I wish that the ship Argo had not flown through the blue Symplegades to the land of Colchis.'

13 EcR, vii (1811), 716.

a section devoted entirely to translations from Greek tragedy was included in the second edition of Bland's Collections from the Greek Anthology.<sup>14</sup> This book had its origin in a series of translations written by Robert Bland and his friend John Herman Merivale. Robert Bland (?1779-1825) was educated at Harrow and Pembroke College, Cambridge. After graduating in 1802, he entered holy orders and taught for some years as assistant master at Harrow. He then became a curate and died at Kenilworth in 1825. He was 'much esteemed in his day' as a classical scholar, and apart from his translations he wrote The Elements of Latin Hexameters and Pentameters, which became a standard textbook.<sup>15</sup> John Herman Merivale (1779-1844) attended St John's College, Cambridge, but left without a degree. He next studied law at Lincoln's Inn, and was called to the bar in 1804. He translated from Italian as well as from Greek, and also published some of his own poetry. He was a friend of Byron, who praised his translations in English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.<sup>16</sup>

The translations of Bland and Merivale were first published in the Monthly Magazine, beginning in March 1805,<sup>17</sup> and in the following year the translations were collected and published anonymously as Translations, Chiefly from the Greek Anthology. Encouraged by the success of this venture, Bland and Merivale brought out a second, much enlarged edition in 1813, the authors

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14 For this, and all other books containing one or more passages in translation, published between 1800 and 1840, see Appendix 2, Section B. For all new translations of complete plays, published in book form, see Appendix 1, Section B.

15 DNB.

16 DNB.

17 See Collections from the Greek Anthology, new edition by J.H. Merivale (1833), iv-v.



being cited on the title-page as 'the Rev. Robert Bland and others', and the translators of each piece being identifiable by their initials. Apart from Bland and Merivale, the two main contributors were Francis Hodgson and Thomas Denman. Only Denman contributed a translation from Greek tragedy. Thomas Denman (1779-1854) was educated at Eton and St John's College, Cambridge. He came to London in 1800 to study law, and began to practise towards the end of 1803. He contributed to the Monthly and Critical Reviews for some years, but by 1820 had devoted himself entirely to a career in law and politics, which culminated in his appointment as Lord Chief Justice in 1832.<sup>18</sup>

The principal addition to the second edition was the section entitled 'Extracts from the Grecian Drama' (pp.240-80). In his prefatory remarks to this section, Bland explained that in spite of the popularity of Potter's 'faithful and animated translations', he himself had always thought that the 'true spirit' of Greek drama 'might be more nearly attained, by adopting the sonorous and majestic couplet. . . which, however unsuitable to the purpose of representing violent and sudden emotions, is particularly well adapted as the vehicle both of declamatory passion, and of pathetic sweetness.'<sup>19</sup> This belief, he went on, would be either proved or disproved by the 'detached scenes and single speeches which I have at different times amused myself by translating'. Of the thirteen scenes and speeches from Greek tragedy, one (p. 251) is by Dr Johnson, one (p. 261) is by Denman, one (pp. 264-66) is anonymous, two (pp. 243-44, 259-60) are by Merivale, and

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18 DNB.

19 Collections from the Greek Anthology (1813), 240.

the remaining eight are by Bland himself.<sup>20</sup> According to Merivale, these translations (other than that by Johnson) were all composed after 1806.<sup>21</sup>

The mere fact that the translators had elected to translate into couplets, a metre so closely identified with the Augustan age, is a warning of what principles of translation are to be applied. Quite apart from the tradition of free paraphrase, the translations must inevitably be affected by the difficulties imposed by rhyming lines, and the need to expand and contract the translation to fit the available space. These misgivings can soon be shown to be well-founded.

To take Bland's translations first: these are rarely very close, and consist mostly of free paraphrase. He sometimes translates incorrectly, and often adds material which he may have argued was implicit in the original text, but which in fact misrepresents it entirely. He has selected passages more or less equally from Euripides and Sophocles, and uses the same style to translate both. His second passage (pp. 245-46), entitled 'Electra taking the Urn of Orestes', a translation of Soph. El. 1126-70, is one of his better efforts. In some ways this passage is well fitted to expression in rhyming couplets, because there is constant counterbalance and contrast between 'now' and 'then', 'I' and 'you', 'we, the innocent' and 'they, the murderers', and its tone is that of the 'declamatory passion, and. . . pathetic sweetness' specified by Bland in his prefatory note.

Bland begins well enough, with a reasonable paraphrase of

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20 The passages are listed in Appendix 2, Section A (i).

21 Collections from the Greek Anthology, new edition (1833), vii.

El. 1126-30:

Mournful remembrancer, whose orb contains  
 Whate'er of dear Orestes now remains,  
 How dead my hopes in thee, but lately sent  
 A blooming boy to happy banishment;  
 For now I bear whatever lived of thee  
 In this small record of mortality! (ll. 1-6)<sup>22</sup>

But the translation of El. 1131-35 contains an incorrect translation of *χεροῖν τοῖνδε*, which surely are the hands of Electra, and not 'the murderer's hands' (l. 8), as well as two rather too freely paraphrased lines (ll. 9-10):

Oh had I died, before to foreign lands  
 I sent thee, rescued from the murderer's hands!  
 Then had we shared one melancholy doom,  
 And peaceful slumber'd in thy father's tomb. (ll. 7-10)<sup>23</sup>

Following this, El. 1136-42 are fairly closely translated, although one phrase, *ἄθλιον βάρος* (El. 1140: 'a pitiful burden') is omitted, and *σμικρός* ('little') becomes 'cherish'd' (l. 16), a change which takes no account of the repeated *σμικρὸς*. . . *σμικρῶ* in the same line (El. 1142):

Afar from home beneath another sky  
 Thou diest — and ah! no sister then was nigh  
 To bathe thy corse, and from the greedy fire  
 Collect thy ashes, as the dead require;

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- 22 El. 1126-30: 'Ah, memorial of him whom I loved best on earth! Ah, Orestes, whose life hath no relic save this, — how far from the hopes with which I sent thee forth is the manner in which I receive thee back! Now I carry thy poor dust in my hands; but thou wert radiant, my child, when I sped thee forth from home!' (Jebb)
- 23 El. 1131-35: 'Would that I had yielded up my breath, ere, with these hands, I stole thee away, and sent thee to a strange land, and rescued thee from death; that so thou mightest have been stricken down on that self-same day, and had thy portion in the tomb of thy sire!' (Jebb)

But strangers paid the debt; who now return  
Thy cherish'd dust within this little urn. (ll. 11-16)<sup>24</sup>

The translation of El. 1143-50 is a mixture of free paraphrase and close translation, with El. 1148 being omitted altogether, and ll. 18-19 being Bland's own work, except for the phrase 'love that sweeten'd pain' (l. 18), which is an admirable version of *πόνω γλυκεῖ* (El. 1145). His culminating line,

And rear'd thee, brother — only for the grave? (l. 22)  
is also quite successful in transposing the idea of dashed hope contained in El. 1149-50, but he rather spoils the effect by adding another two lines, also derived from El. 1149-50, which have nothing to recommend them:

And have I watch'd thine infancy in vain  
With lengthen'd hope, and love that sweeten'd pain?  
Shielded thine innocence from dangers rude  
With more than parents' fond solicitude?  
Ta'en thee from menial hands, myself thy slave,  
And rear'd thee, brother — only for the grave?  
Now barren all my hopeful cares are made,  
Lost with thy life, unfruitful as thy shade. (ll. 17-24)<sup>25</sup>

It is impossible for a translation in rhyming couplets to do proper justice to El. 1150-56, lines consisting of a series of short, broken utterances leading to a bitter climax in the oxymoron *μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ* ('my mother, no mother') and its long dependent relative clause. Bland's version singularly fails to

24 El. 1136-42: 'But now, an exile from home and fatherland, thou hast perished miserably, far from thy sister; woe is me, these loving hands have not washed or decked thy corpse, nor taken up, as was meet, their sad burden from the flaming pyre. No; at the hands of strangers, hapless one, thou hast had those rites, and so art come to us, a little dust in a narrow urn!' (Jebb)

25 El. 1143-50: 'Ah, woe is me for my nursing long ago, so vain, that I oft bestowed on thee with loving toil! For thou wast never thy mother's darling so much as mine; nor was any in the house thy nurse but I; and by thee I was ever called "sister". But now all this hath vanished in a day, with thy death.' (Jebb)

reproduce this, since he has expanded the shorter phrases and given too free and feeble a version of the long final dependent clause; but he must be given credit for his version (ll. 29-30) of

γελῶσι δ' ἐχθροί· μαίνεται δ' ὕφ' ἡδονῆς  
μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ (El. 1153-54),

although his ludicrous addition of 'hails her lifeless boy' does rather ruin the overall effect:

Oh thou hast gone, and like the whirlwind's force  
Swept all away together in thy course.  
Dead is my sire, and I, who lived alone  
In thee, no longer live since thou art gone.  
Our foes exult; our mother, wild with joy,  
(Alas, no mother) hails her lifeless boy;  
For whom I waited as my sorrow's friend,  
Avenger of his father's timeless end. (ll. 25-32)<sup>26</sup>

These lines are followed by a completely inadequate version of the climactic lines of Electra's long speech, in which she baldly and bitterly states the fact that her beloved brother is dead, and has returned to her in ashes instead of human form. The final contrast between past hopes and present disaster is ruined by Bland's short, feeble, over-sentimentalised paraphrase:

But now instead, o'er this sad urn I weep,  
Where his poor ashes cold and silent sleep. (ll. 33-34)<sup>27</sup>

The broken lamentations of El. 1160-63 are mostly omitted, being untranslatable into couplets, but the phrases δέμας οἰκτρόν

26 El. 1151-56: 'Like a whirlwind, thou hast swept all away with thee. Our father is gone; I am dead in regard to thee; thou thyself hast perished: our foes exult; that mother, who is none, is mad with joy, — she, of whom thou didst oft send me secret messages, thy heralds, saying that thou thyself wouldst appear as an avenger.' (Jebb)

27 El. 1156-59: 'But our evil fortune, thine and mine, hath reft all that away, and hath sent thee forth unto me thus, — no more the form that I loved so well, but ashes and an idle shade.' (Jebb)



(El. 1161: 'pitiable body') and δεινοτάτας. . . πεμφθεῖς  
 κελεύθους (El. 1162-63: 'sent on a dreaded road') are cobbled  
 together and the 'dreaded road', immediately identifiable to the  
 Greek scholar, is made easier for the English reader in the form  
 'the regions of the dead'. This free treatment is completed by  
 adding a fanciful expansion of El. 1163-64:

Oh piteous corse! oh brother, sent to tread,  
 Before this wretch, the regions of the dead!  
 How hast thou left me to my foes a prey,  
 How has thy funeral swept my hopes away? (11.35-38)<sup>28</sup>

Bland's closing lines take even more liberties with the Greek  
 text, freely paraphrasing, expanding, explaining and rearranging  
 the ideas of the Greek:

Yet take me, gentle brother! give me room  
 To rest beside thee in this narrow tomb!  
 That, as we shared affliction when alive,  
 Our boundless love may in the shades survive,  
 While our dust slumbers, mix'd by friendly fate,  
 Dull and unconscious of a mother's hate. (11. 39-44)<sup>29</sup>

Read as a piece of English poetry of a certain kind, this  
 monologue of Electra is not entirely worthless. Bland controls  
 his couplets well, managing to avoid the danger of monotonous  
 regularity; and although his poetic diction belongs to an earlier  
 generation, he does at least manage to avoid its worst excesses.  
 As a translation, it is a good example of the eighteenth-century  
 paraphrastic tradition, but unacceptable by any other standards.

Bland's other translations, done in the same fashion, sometimes

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28 El. 1160-64: 'Ah me, ah me! O piteous dust! Alas, thou dear  
 one, sent on a dire journey, how hast thou undone me, — undone  
 me indeed, O brother mine!' (Jebb)

29 El. 1165-70: 'Therefore take me to this thy home, me, who am as  
 nothing, to thy nothingness, that I may dwell with thee hence-  
 forth below: for when thou wert on earth, we shared alike; and  
 now I fain would die, that I may not be parted from thee in the  
 grave. For I see that the dead have rest from pain.' (Jebb)

wander even farther from the original, as in his much-expanded version of Aj. 679-83 (p.255):

Man, only man, yet stubborn and untaught,  
Breaks nature's laws, and sets her powers at naught,  
In youth (e'er yet my wayward fits began,  
Ere yet by heav'n deserted and by man,)   
If any friend had played the torturer's part,  
I raged, but soon restored him to my heart;  
Yet so restored him, that his changing will  
Should lose the opportunity of ill;  
For even in the strictest friendship we shall find  
A faithless haven from a world unkind,<sup>30</sup>

or his version of Tro. 384 (p. 257), in which he ignores Cassandra's κυῖαν ἄμεινον τὰς χρεά ('it is better not to speak about atrocities'), and writes:

These are the triumphs of that mighty host,  
Who scatter'd havoc, and appall'd our coast;  
Their deeds of black impurity to speak  
Would freeze thy soul, and flush thy modest cheek.

One's confidence in Bland's accuracy and allegiance to the Greek text is not aided by the fact that on page 256 he ascribes this whole speech, which belongs to Cassandra in the Troades, to the Hecuba.

Merivale's two translations are no better. The first is a very free translation of Alc. 435-59 and 985-1005, which he has worked up into one poem of 'gloomy and solemn sentiments'.<sup>31</sup> The second, a version of Tro. 634-83 (and not from the Andromache, as is wrongly stated on page 259), has so much added material and free paraphrase, so many omissions and compressions that it is very difficult indeed even to identify the correct original passage,

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30 Aj. 679-83: 'Our enemy is to be hated but as one who will hereafter be a friend; and towards a friend I would wish but thus far to show aid and service, as knowing that he will not always abide. For to most men the haven of friendship is false.' (Jebb)

31 Merivale's own description, in his notes to this passage, Collections from the Greek Anthology (1813), 270.

without attempting the impossible task of discussing Merivale's work as translation. His first ten lines, intended as a version of Tro. 634-40, are typical:

To have been never born, oh mother! ne'er  
Tasted the freshness of this upper air,  
Is but the same with death — to die! to be  
A cypher blotted from mortality —  
Death is far better than a life of pain,  
Who feel not, grieve not, and our fears are vain.  
Oh, rather for the living let them flow,  
Those wretched victims of perpetual woe,  
Who still, in bitterness of soul, possess  
The memory of departed happiness.<sup>32</sup>

Denman's one translation, of Andr. 103-16, is the best of the whole collection. He has in his favour the fortunate choice of the only extant passage of elegiac couplets in Greek tragedy, which helps his task of translating into English couplets. But more than that, Denman seems to be more willing than his friends to allow his Greek author to speak for himself with only the minimum of interference:

To lofty Ilion when the Spartan dame  
Was led, all blooming, by her shepherd boy,  
Majestic to the princely couch she came,  
No consort, but a curse to him and Troy. 5  
For her, oh Troy! against thy menaced town  
Greece brought her thousand ships, her fire and sword,  
Her rapid vengeance mow'd thy bulwarks down,  
And slew thy best defence, my dear loved lord.  
Yes — round those walls the savage conqueror bore, 10  
Bound to his car, the body of the brave:  
Torn from my bride-bed to a hostile shore,  
I live to feel what 'tis to be a slave.  
While round the awful form the Goddess rears,  
Driven by hard threats, my suppliant arms are thrown,

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32 Collections from the Greek Anthology (1813), 259; Tro. 634-40: 'O mother, mother, listen to a beautiful saying, so that I may put joy in your heart. I say that not to have been born is the same as death, and that dying is better than living in misery. For the dead man, having experienced suffering, feels no pain; but he who has prospered, and fallen into misfortune, strays in his mind from former prosperity.'

I melt, dissolving in perpetual tears,  
Like drops, that tremble from a roof of stone.<sup>33</sup>

15

Helen becomes 'the Spartan dame' (l. 1), Paris becomes 'her shepherd boy' (l. 2), Achilles, the *παῖς Ἀλίας Θέτιδος* (Andr. 108: 'son of Thetis the sea-dweller'), becomes 'the savage conqueror' (l. 9), and the reference to Hermione (Andr. 111-14) is omitted. Presumably the first two alterations are made for reasons of metre and rhyme, while the last one was necessary because of the difficulty of the mythological reference. But there is no good reason for the third change, since any reader who could identify the 'Spartan dame' and her 'shepherd boy' could surely also identify the son of Thetis. The teardrop image in the last line is also slightly rewritten.

Bland's experiment in rhyming tragedy was made at an interesting time, when poetic fashions and ideas about the nature of poetry were changing. His own tastes had been formed from a reading of Pope and his contemporaries, and his translations belong to the same school. He could no doubt count on a large enough audience among readers similarly schooled, although more advanced critics might sneer. The Monthly Review considered him to have given 'a

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33 Collections from the Greek Anthology (1813), 261; Andr. 103-16: 'Paris brought his bride Helen to his bed-chamber in steep-built Troy, not in marriage, but disastrously. For her sake, O Troy, the swift war-god of the Greeks with his thousand ships took you captive by fire and sword, and — alas! — my husband Hector, whom the son of Thetis the sea-goddess dragged in his chariot round the walls. I myself was taken from my chamber to the sea-shore, my head enveloped in loathesome slavery. And I shed many tears down my cheek when I left city and chamber and husband in the dust. Alas for my misery! Why must I still see the light as the slave of Hermione? Harassed by her, I approach this statue of the goddess as a suppliant, and throw my arms about it; I dissolve in tears like a gushing stream flowing down a rock.'



very complete feeling of the beauties of Greek tragedy',<sup>34</sup> but J.B. Sumner in the Quarterly thought Bland's attempt had failed,<sup>35</sup> although Sumner does seem to have accepted the old principle that a translator had the right to take very considerable liberties with his text.<sup>36</sup> The general opinion may perhaps be guessed from Merivale's decision, when he came to edit the third edition of the Collections from the Greek Anthology, that the 'Extracts from the Grecian Drama' should be dropped. According to the 'Advertisement' in the third edition, Merivale had decided to exclude matter that was irrelevant to the original purpose of the collection,<sup>37</sup> and he perhaps felt that forms of translation suitable for adapting poems from the Greek Anthology were not really suitable for tragedy.

Not long before the 1813 edition of Bland's book was published, Peacock also seems to have been considering publication of translations from Greek tragedy. In an appendix on Peacock's verse translations from Greek drama, Brett-Smith quotes a fragment of a letter of 3 July 1860, in which Peacock stated that he made translations of some Greek choruses in 1812-1813, but never published them, except for four lines which he later included in Rhododaphne. Brett-Smith adds further evidence to suggest that at about the same time Peacock had contemplated publishing some translations, possibly as a magazine article, but had abandoned the project.<sup>38</sup> Apart from his versions of the fragments of

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34 MR, lxxviii (1815), 358.

35 QR, x (1813-14), 152.

36 QR, x (1813-14), 146.

37 Collections from the Greek Anthology, new edition (1833), vi-vii.

38 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.413-19.



Euripides' Phaethon, which he published many years later in Fraser's Magazine,<sup>39</sup> and some unpublished scraps of the opening scene of Prometheus, which are not earlier than 1844,<sup>40</sup> Peacock left manuscript versions of ten other passages from Greek tragedy — six from Euripides, three from Sophocles, and one from Aeschylus — nine of which belong to the general period 1811-1818, and the tenth was apparently written about 1805.

The earliest piece, an expanded version of some lines that appear at the end of several plays of Euripides,<sup>41</sup> is little better than doggerel, but it may be said in passing that the principles of translation which the lines exemplify — fairly close translation developing into free paraphrase, and concentrating on transcribing the ideas of the original — are the same as those used by Peacock for his later translations. Six of the other nine pieces accord with Peacock's reference in 1860 to his translation of some tragic choruses;<sup>42</sup> a seventh, 'Phaedra and Nurse', which translates a dialogue in anapaests,<sup>43</sup> could be classed along with the choral

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39 FM, xlv (1852), 448-58. In the second article of his short series 'Horae Dramaticae', Peacock offered a reconstruction of Phaethon, including a translation of the fragments set in order on his conjectured reconstruction. The article is reprinted in Works of T.L. Peacock, X.39-68.

40 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.418-19.

41 The lines, beginning πολλὰὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων, are found at Alc. 1159-63, Andr. 1284-88, Bacch. 1388-92, Hel. 1688-92 and Med. 1415-19. Brett-Smith, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.417, prints Peacock's translation, 'Many are the forms of fate' in his appendix but refers only to Andr. 1284-88.

42 i) 'Necessity', Alc. 962-1005, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.212-14. ii) 'Youth and Age', HF. 637-72, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.214-15. iii) 'Choral Ode to Love', Hipp. 525-64, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.221-22. iv) 'Connubial Equality', PV. 887-93, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.223. v) 'Choral Ode on the Evils of Life', OC. 1211-48, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.224-26. vi) 'Oh blest are they', Ant. 582-91, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.228-29.

43 'Phaedra and Nurse', Hipp. 176-266, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.216-20.

odes as lyric pieces. The two remaining pieces are blank-verse translations of speeches in the standard iambic trimeter of Greek tragedy, and seem to have been translated a year or two later than the other passages, probably around 1815.<sup>44</sup>

In his study of Peacock's work, Carl Dawson does not have much good to say about the translations from Greek tragedy (except for his approval of the later translations from the Phaethon),<sup>45</sup> but his few remarks suggest that he was assessing them only on their merits as English poetry. He has, moreover, rather unfairly taken one of the worst passages (the opening lines of 'Phaedra and Nurse') to illustrate his judgement. But it is possible to make a distinction between the translations of lyric passages and the two translations of speeches, not only in point of date and difference in metre, but also in the form adopted for the translations, and thereby to verify the general conclusions Dawson draws about Peacock's development as a poet.

For the lyric passages, Peacock usually employs lines of iambic tetrameter, either in rhyming couplets or in some other rhyming pattern. This had been a popular metre for some time, and Peacock also used it for his serious original poetry. Twice, in 'Necessity' and 'Oh blest are they, and they alone', he uses rhyming lines of varying length. The latter takes the form of a short, irregular

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44 i) 'The Death of Oedipus', OC. 1586-1662, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.226-28. ii) 'Polyxena to Ulysses', Hec. 342-78, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.223-24. Brett-Smith, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.413, suggests they were probably written around 1815. K.N. Cameron, Shelley and his Circle, 1773-1822, III.82-84, further discusses the general problem of dating, and also suggests (III.396) a date of ?1815-1818 for these two pieces.

45 Carl Dawson, His Fine Wit: a Study of Thomas Love Peacock, 32, 249, 296.

ode, but the former is particularly interesting since it is a fully developed 'pindaric' ode, with strophe, antistrophe and epode. The original ode has two pairs of stanzas in strophic responsion, and Peacock has compressed the second pair into his epode. The adoption of such a strict metrical form naturally makes the task of translation doubly difficult, and necessitates the use of fairly free paraphrase, but despite these restraints Peacock has kept close to the ideas of Euripides in the strophe and antistrophe while expanding the actual words and phrases used. For example, his translation of the two opening lines becomes:

My steps have pressed the flowers  
That to the Muses' bowers  
The eternal dews of Helicon have given:  
And trod the mountain height,  
Where Science, young and bright,  
Scans with poetic gaze the midnight-heaven. (ll. 1-6)<sup>46</sup>

In the epode, though, Peacock abandons Euripides' tribute to Alcestis and writes a short elegy strongly reminiscent of Collins's 'Ode Occasioned by the Death of Mr Thomson':

There oft the traveller from his path shall turn,  
To grace with holy rites her funeral urn,  
And muse beneath the lonely cypress shade,  
That waves, in silent gloom, where her remains are laid.  
(ll. 39-42)<sup>47</sup>

This technique of free interpretation is typical of Peacock, particularly in his habit of taking an image, which in the Greek is often implicit, and making it explicit.<sup>48</sup> Even so, he is less

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46 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.212; Alc. 962-63: 'I, too, have engaged in literary study and eagerly scanned the skies.'

47 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.214; Alc. 1000-04: 'And someone, turning his steps aside, will say this: "This woman once died for her husband, and now she is a blessed spirit. Hail, lady, and may you grant us good fortune."'

48 For example, compare HF. 649-54 with 'Youth and Age' (Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.214-15), ll. 17-24; and Ant. 585-91 with 'Oh blest are they. . .' (Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.229), ll. 11-20.

inclined than Bland and Merivale to introduce his own ideas into his translation. His closest translation of a lyric passage is 'Connubial Equality', but its monotony is the price paid for such closeness:

Oh! wise was he, the first who taught  
This lesson of observant thought,  
That equal fates alone may bless  
The bowers of nuptial happiness;  
That never where ancestral pride  
Inflames, or affluence rolls its tide,  
Should love's ill-omened bonds entwine  
The offspring of an humbler line.<sup>49</sup>

This does not mean that he always produces good poetry when he writes free paraphrase: the passage criticised by Dawson (the opening lines of 'Phaedra and Nurse'), which is a paraphrase, deserves his censure:

Oh, ills of life! relentless train  
Of sickness, tears, and wasting pain!  
Where shall I turn? what succour claim  
To warm with health thy failing frame?  
Thy couch, by which so long we mourn,  
Forth from the palace doors is borne. (ll. 1-6)<sup>50</sup>

But a later part of 'Phaedra and Nurse' is more inspired, and here, if only for a short time, Peacock does seem to have caught the words, ideas and spirit of Euripides all at once:

Phaedra: Oh! bear me to these heights divine,  
Where wild winds bend the mountain pine,  
Where to the dog's melodious cry,  
The rocks and caverned glens reply.

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49 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.223; PV. 887-93: 'Ah, sage, sage in sooth, was he who first pondered this truth in his mind and with his tongue gave it utterance — that to marry on one's own degree is far the best, and that neither among them that are puffed up by riches nor among them that are mighty in pride of birth should marriage be desired by him who toileth with his hands.' (Weir Smyth)

50 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.216; Hipp. 176-80: 'O mortal afflictions and loathsome illnesses! What shall I do with you? And what shall I not do? Here is the bright light for you, and here the air. Now the bed where you lie in sickness is outside the house.'



By heaven, I long to grasp the spear,  
 Hang on the track of flying deer,  
 Shout to the dogs, as fast we sweep  
 Tumultuous down the sylvan steep,  
 And hurl along the tainted air  
 The javelin from my streaming hair.

70

Nurse: Alas! what may these visions be?  
 What are the dogs and woods to thee?  
 Why is it thus thy fancy roves  
 To lonely springs and cypress groves,  
 When here the hanging rock distils  
 Its everlasting crystal rills? (ll. 63-78)<sup>51</sup>

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The image of deer-hunting is slightly rewritten, but still a good equivalent of the original, although one wonders why the deer have to be 'flying' (l. 68) rather than 'dappled' (Hipp. 218: βαλιδῆς), which would also fit the metre, and why the air has become 'tainted' (l. 71). Peacock's devotion to an outmoded poetic diction sometimes draws him into even worse expressions than these. A few lines farther on from the above passage one finds

Conspicuous in the equestrian game (l. 82),

and

You long to urge the sylvan war (l. 86).

Dawson has shown the eighteenth-century poetic tradition to have been a strong influence on Peacock's earlier poetry.<sup>52</sup> Such influence is absent from the two translations of speeches, which

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51 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.218-19; Hipp. 215-27: 'Ph. Send me to the mountains. I will go to the wood and past the pine-trees, where the beast-killing hounds tread as they draw near to the dappled deer. By the gods, I long to halloo to the dogs and to hurl the Thessalian javelin, with the metal-tipped weapon held in my hand beside my hair. N. Why on earth, my child, are you so distracted? What interest do you have in hunting? Why do you long for flowing springs? For there is a dewy hill-side nearby, adjoining the city-walls, from which you could get a cupful.'

52 Dawson, His Fine Wit, 3-36. See especially p. 16: 'As a young man he turned his eyes to this earlier poetic scene; he also lived in terms of the ideals of solitude, private meditation, and melancholy espoused by Gray, Collins, Thomson, Dyer, and other of his favourites.'



supports the belief that they were written a little later than the others. For these translations Peacock used blank verse, which freed him from the problems created by rhyme-schemes and strophic responsion, and made a closer translation much more feasible. Even so, his translation is not uniformly close, but sometimes stretches to paraphrase and the omission of the occasional word or phrase. His blank verse, although a little stiff, is not monotonous. The following extract is a good example, and also illustrates how he moves between close translation and free paraphrase, as circumstances demand:

(A peal of thunder has just warned Oedipus and his daughters that his death is imminent, and the two women burst into tears.)

Touched at the bitter sound, he wrapped his arms	
Around them: 'Oh, my children!' he exclaimed,	25
'The hour and place of my appointed rest	
Are found: your father from this breathing world	
Departs: a weary lot was yours, my children,	
Wide o'er the inhospitable earth to lead	
A blind, forlorn, old, persecuted man.	30
These toils are yours no more: yet well I deem	
Affection overweighted them, and the love,	
The soul-felt love, which he who caused them bore you,	
Where shall you find again?' Then on their necks	
He wept, and they on his, in speechless woe,	35
And all was silence round. A thrilling voice	
Called ' <u>Oedipus</u> !' the blood of all who heard	
Congeaed with fear, and every hair grew stiff. (ll. 24-38)	53

There is most variety of technique in the speech of Oedipus (ll.

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53 Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.227; OC. 1610-25: 'And when he heard their sudden bitter cry, he put his arms around them, and said: "My children, this day ends your father's life. For now all hath perished that was mine, and no more shall ye bear the burden of tending me, — no light one, well I know, my children; yet one little word makes all those toils as naught; love had ye from me, as from none beside; and now ye shall have me with you no more, through all your days to come." On such wise, close-clinging to each other, sire and daughters sobbed and wept. But when they had made an end of wailing, and the sound went up no more, there was a stillness; and suddenly a voice of one who cried aloud to him, so that the hair of all stood up on their heads for sudden fear, and they were afraid.' (Jebb)

26-34). Lines 26-28 are a free translation of most of OC. 1612-15; then Peacock omits the next two lines and inserts two lines of his own (ll. 29-30), followed by a translation of

τὴν δυσπρόνητον ἔξετ' ἄμφ' ἐμοὶ τροφὴν (OC. 1613-14),  
 κούκ' ἐτι

which has been displaced from its correct position; finally, in ll. 32-34, there is a paraphrase of OC. 1617-19.

Peacock has left no clear indication of why he began translating from Greek tragedy, or why he gave it up. He does seem to have considered the possibility of having his translations published,<sup>54</sup> and K.N. Cameron suggests that Peacock's letter to the Morning Chronicle, 8 April 1814, which included lines 25-40 of his translation 'Phaedra and Nurse', was prompted in part by a hope that it might catch the interest of some publisher.<sup>55</sup> Cameron further suggests that Peacock wrote the letter at this particular time (possibly a year or so after the translation had been composed) because Kean had recently given a much-discussed performance of Hamlet at Drury Lane, and the translated passage in Peacock's letter contained sentiments similar to those in Hamlet's most famous soliloquy.<sup>56</sup> (There is no denying that such lines as

And ignorance of those paths of dread  
 Which no returning step may tread,

sound very familiar, but only a knowledge of Greek makes possible the discovery that the familiarity owes more to Peacock's deliberate imitation of Shakespeare than to the original words of

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54 See Brett-Smith's remarks in Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.416.

55 Cameron, Shelley and his Circle, III.280-81.

56 'Phaedra and Nurse' (Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.217), ll. 35-36. Compare Hipp. 191-96 with 'Phaedra and Nurse', ll. 27-36. The general thoughts are the same, but Peacock has deliberately echoed Hamlet, III.i.76-82.

Euripides.) Cameron may well be right in his conjecture, but he has explained only the possible reason for the letter, and not the translations themselves. It may be that Peacock began the work for much the same reasons as Bland and Merivale, but laid his translations aside when theirs were published in 1813. If his interest revived in 1814-1815, there must have been other reasons. Felix Felton, misreading Cameron's remarks, suggests that Peacock may have hoped to interest Kean in the possibility of staging a Greek tragedy.<sup>57</sup> This is hardly likely, as it was universally accepted at this time that there was no money to be had in staging a Greek play.<sup>58</sup> It is just possible that Peacock returned to his translations as a result of public interest in Schlegel's Lectures, published in French in 1814 and in English in 1815. Whatever the reason, Peacock was not sufficiently encouraged to continue the task, and by the time there was a public audience for translations of Greek tragedy, Peacock had other interests of his own.

There is some other evidence of interest in Greek tragedy in 1814-1815 in a rather unexpected place: the old-fashioned Gentleman's Magazine. In its section devoted to 'Select Poetry', the Gentleman's Magazine had often included poems translated from the classics.<sup>59</sup> Until 1811 these had more often than not been translations from Horace, but, beginning with a translation of the elegy on the death of Bion in January 1812,<sup>60</sup> Greek poetry

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57 Felix Felton, Thomas Love Peacock, 87.

58 See Chapter 6, pp. 161-62.

59 See Chapter 5, p. 129.

60 GM, lxxxii<sup>1</sup> (1812), 60.

began to appear more frequently. The two chief contributors were Lord Thurlow and Hugh Stuart Boyd, both of whom included a translation from Greek tragedy.

Edward Thurlow (1781-1829), second Baron Thurlow, was educated at Harrow and Magdalen College, Oxford, and rather fancied himself as a poet. He published several small volumes of poetry, including translations of Horace and Anacreon, which had been ridiculed by Thomas Moore in the Edinburgh Review.<sup>61</sup> Most of his translations in the Gentleman's Magazine were these wretched versions of Anacreon, and his snippet of Greek tragedy, a translation of a choral ode in the Hippolytus,<sup>62</sup> is equally contemptible. As a translation it is close enough, but the limping English verses, with their half-rhymes, disjointed metre and warped syntax, destroy any merit it might wish to claim:

White-wing'd bark of Cretan wood,  
Which across the briny main,  
Over the sea-raging flood,  
From her happy home our Queen  
Convey'd, a most unhappy bride,  
In ill-starr'd wedlock to be tied! (ll. 21-26)<sup>63</sup>

Presumably the Gentleman's Magazine and its readers were more interested in the fact that the translation had been done by a 'sometime Lord High Chancellor of England', as we are proudly informed.<sup>64</sup>

Hugh Stuart Boyd (1781-1848)<sup>65</sup> was educated at Westminster

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61 DNB and ER, xxiii (1814), 411-24.

62 GM, lxxxiv<sup>1</sup> (1814), 165-66; Hipp. 732-75.

63 Hipp. 752-60: 'Oh white-winged passage-boat of Crete, that through the salt-thudding sea-wave of the brine brought my queen from her blessed home to give her a bridal's joy that had naught but ill.' (Barrett)

64 The title of the translation in GM is so worded.

65 See Elizabeth Barrett to Mr Boyd, xiv-xxxviii, for a fuller biography.



and Cambridge, although he spent so much of his time at Cambridge writing a 'long and incredibly dull'<sup>66</sup> tragedy called Luceria that he left without taking a degree. Freed from the need to earn a living by the regular receipt of income from the family estates in Ireland, Boyd spent the rest of his life moving from one furnished house to another with his long-suffering wife and daughter, and engaging in arid study of the Greek Christian fathers. He published a number of books — poetic translations, essays and some original poetry — including a prose translation of the Agamemnon.<sup>67</sup> He contracted ophthalmia in 1811 and eventually became blind, at some point before he made the acquaintance of Elizabeth Barrett in 1827.

In 1814-1815 a number of his translations of Greek poetry appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine. These were mostly from Gregory of Nazianzen, but included one of the most famous choral odes in Greek tragedy (Sophocles' encomium of Attica in the Oedipus Coloneus),<sup>68</sup> although anyone who relied on Boyd's translation would find it hard to understand why the original ode has been so highly praised. Boyd's opening lines, which reduce the nightingale to an eighteenth-century stereotype, are a fair example of this monotonous and pedestrian travesty:

Stranger, thy favour'd feet have found  
The loveliest spot of Attic ground,  
For beauteous steeds afar renown'd;  
Colonus, sparkling fair and bright,  
Beneath the pure unclouded light;

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66 Elizabeth Barrett to Mr Boyd, xv. Boyd tried unsuccessfully to have Luceria produced at Drury Lane.

67 The Agamemnon of Aeschylus. A Tragedy. Translated from the Greek by Hugh Stuart Boyd (London, 1823).

68 GM, lxxxv<sup>2</sup> (1815), 254; OC. 668-719.



Where trilling slow her plaintive tale,  
 The clear melodious nightingale  
 Pours sweetest musick o'er the vale.  
 Amid the ivy shade she pines,  
 And mourns among the purple vines. (ll. 1-10)<sup>69</sup>

Boyd often ventures to introduce some 'poetry' of his own into what is otherwise fairly close translation, but certainly does not improve his work by doing so:

The sparkling rills, the silver fountains,  
 Nor fail to flow, nor idly sleep,  
 But, warbling down the verdant mountains,  
 O'er incense-breathing meadows creep;  
 Along the fruitful valley gleam,  
 And swell Ilyssus' cooling stream. (ll. 23-28)<sup>70</sup>

This translation was later included by Boyd as an appendix to his prose translation of the Agamemnon.<sup>71</sup> In the preface he explained that he believed that a 'literal poetic version' of Greek or Latin poetry which also preserved 'elegance and spirit' was impossible, particularly in translating choral odes. He had therefore translated the Agamemnon into prose, hoping that this would retain 'the manner and the spirit' of Aeschylus; but appended his version of the ode from Oedipus Coloneus as a sample of a 'literal' verse translation.<sup>72</sup> Although Boyd has expanded and altered the original a little, it is fairly reasonable to accept his version as a 'literal poetic' one, since Boyd accepted that the special linguistic difficulties of the Greek choral odes

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69 OC. 668-74: 'Stranger, in this land of goodly steeds thou hast come to earth's fairest home, even to our white Colonus; where the nightingale, a constant guest, trills her clear note in the covert of green glades, dwelling amid the wine-dark ivy.' (Jebb)

70 OC. 685-91: 'Nor fail the sleepless founts whence the waters of Cephissus wander, but each day with stainless tide he moveth over the plains of the land's swelling bosom, for the giving of quick increase.' (Jebb)

71 Boyd's Agamemnon, 67-69.

72 Boyd's Agamemnon, iv-viii.

allowed their translators some licence in their interpretation. But the small amount of alteration he made in the ode was enough to turn his 'literal' translation into a piece of very bad eighteenth-century verse.

The third extract from Greek tragedy published in the Gentleman's Magazine, by a certain Thomas Partridge, otherwise unknown, is taken from Medea's speech as she contemplates the murder of her children.<sup>73</sup> He makes a fairly close translation, although his choice of rhyming couplets makes some alterations unavoidable. For example, his translation of

ὦ δυστάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς αὐθαδίας

(Med. 1028: 'Ah! wretched am I because of my wilfulness') is expanded to:

O wretched woman that I am! whose heart  
Thus dares a deed, that makes the stranger start. (ll. 1-2)

The starting stranger is there only to provide a rhyme. Partridge follows this with four lines translating two Greek, in which the order of ideas is changed and the emphasis of the repeated ἄλλωc ('in vain') is lost:

Did I, for this, such heavy toils sustain?  
For this, endure the mother's bitter pain?  
Did I, in vain, your plaintive mouths supply  
With strength'ning milk's sweet juice, to quell your cry?<sup>74</sup>  
(ll. 3-6)

Later, κατθανούσαν (Med. 1034: 'when I die') becomes

And that, when I, by length of years opprest,  
Should gently sink, in Death's cold arms, to rest. (ll. 9-10)

The best thing that can be said about Partridge's translation is

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73 GM, lxxxv<sup>2</sup> (1815), 350; Med. 1028-37.

74 Med. 1029-30: 'In vain, then, I have reared you, my children, and in vain I have laboured and suffered torment.'

that it is only fourteen lines long.

Apart from their poetic poverty, what these translations in the Gentleman's Magazine have in common is their attempt at literal verse translation, in considerable contrast to the free paraphrase of Bland and Merivale, and Peacock's attempt to transcribe ideas. What all the translations examined so far have in common is their dependence in one way or another on the old poetic diction of the eighteenth century, a dependence which prevents their translators (with the occasional exception of Peacock, who was in any case the best poet among them) from instilling any freshness and vigour into their work. After these three uninspiring translations in 1814-1815, no further translations from Greek tragedy were published until 1817.

In April of that year William Blackwood published the first number of his Edinburgh Monthly Magazine, which later that year became Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. In the six months before that great metamorphosis John Gibson Lockhart contributed four articles on Greek tragedy, containing numerous passages translated into English. Each article begins with sympathetic and well-informed discussion of some particular aspect of Greek tragedy, and then takes one or two plays to illustrate the points made. Lockhart outlines the plot of the play, adds a few remarks about its style and particular 'beauties', and illustrates with the passages in translation. His articles are particularly addressed to those who know no Greek and little or nothing about Greek drama, and he is obviously anxious to do all he can to persuade such readers that Greek drama is well worth their attention. By using his own translations, he seems to suggest that the translations of Potter and Francklin cannot be trusted to attract the uninitiated.

He begins with Aeschylus,<sup>75</sup> for whom he has a warm admiration, finding him 'inferior to few poets' in his 'grandeur and loftiness of soul' and 'mysterious sublimity'.<sup>76</sup> The article includes two translations from the Prometheus.<sup>77</sup> The first of these is from the explanation given by Prometheus of how he had been prompted by his pity for the degraded and ignorant condition of early mankind to teach them forbidden knowledge. Lockhart begins with a few lines of fairly close translation:

Eyes had they, but they saw not; they had ears,  
But heard not: like the shadows of a dream,  
For ages did they flit upon the earth,  
Rising and vanishing, and left no trace  
Of wisdom or of forethought. Their abodes  
Were not of wood or stone, nor did the sun  
Warm them; for then they dwelt in lightless caves. (ll. 1-7)<sup>78</sup>

He omits Aeschylus' simile for the cave-dwellers, ὥστ' ἀήσυροι  
μύρμηκες (PV. 452-53: 'like little ants'), and then continues  
with a considerably rewritten version of the description of the  
seasons:

The season's change they knew not; when the Spring  
Should shed its roses, or the Summer pour  
Its golden fruits, or icy Winter breathe  
In barrenness and bleakness on the year. (ll. 8-11)<sup>79</sup>

In these lines, the ἀνθεμώδους ἡρος (PV. 455: 'flowery spring')

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75 Bl, i (1817), 39-42.

76 Bl, i (1817), 42.

77 PV. 447-71, 478-83; PV. 953-69, 989-96.

78 Bl, i (1817), 42; PV. 447-53: 'First of all, though they had eyes to see, they saw to no avail; they had ears, but understood not; but, like to shapes in dreams, throughout their length of days, without purpose they wrought all things in confusion. Knowledge had they neither of houses built of bricks and turned to face the sun, nor yet of work in wood; but dwelt beneath the ground like swarming ants, in sunless caves.' (Weir Smyth)

79 PV. 454-56: 'They had no sign either of winter or of flowery spring or of fruitful summer, whereon they could depend.' (Weir Smyth)

becomes

when the Spring  
Should shed its roses. . . (ll. 8-9)

and *χείματος* (PV. 454: 'of winter') becomes

. . . or icy Winter breathe  
In barrenness and bleakness on the year. (ll. 10-11)

The final lines of the passage are considerably rewritten but contain two interesting points. First of all, Lockhart has brilliantly recast the unusual but typically Aeschylean image in PV. 467-68:

θαλασσοπλάγκα δ' οὐτίς ἄλλος ἀντ' ἐμοῦ  
λινόπτερ' ἡῶρε ναυτίλων ὀχήματα.

('Twas I and no one else that contrived the mariner's flaxen-winged car to roam the sea.' Weir Smyth) Lockhart's version is:

I to the tall mast hung the flaxen pinions,  
To bear the vessel bounding o'er the billows. (ll. 23-24)

Following this, Lockhart has taken the word *κατεσκέλλοντο* (PV. 481: 'withered away') and, linking it in his mind with its English derivative 'skeleton', has expanded his translation into:

the balm  
That wak'd the bloom upon the faded cheek,  
And strung the nerveless arm with strength again. (ll. 27-29)

In his second article in May 1817,<sup>80</sup> Lockhart described the *Choephoroe* of Aeschylus and the *Electra* of Sophocles, bringing out the different manner in which each of the two tragedians had approached the same subject. The passages he chose for translation included some dialogue, much of it in stichomythia. Since Lockhart was writing for a non-classical readership, he solved the problem of how to cope with a convention that often produces stilted and

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80 *Bl*, i (1817), 147-52. The translated passages are *Cho*. 183-263, 489-509, 1048-62; and *El*. 1101-1226, 1403-16.



tautologous lines, liable to be ridiculed by his more critical readers, by omitting such lines and phrases as he felt to be repetitive, and giving the dialogue more pace. For example, his second passage from the Choephoroe is part of the scene in which Electra and Orestes invoke the ghost of Agamemnon:

Or. Open, O earth, and send my father forth  
To see the conflict!

El. Proserpine, inspire  
Our souls with energy — our arms with strength.

Or. Oh, father! bear in mind the bloody bath  
Where thou wert slain. 5

El. The veil with which they bound thee.

Or. The toils in which, like a wild beast, they caught thee.  
Why does thy spirit start not from the grave  
When that thou hearest of these unnatural deeds?

El. Why lift'st thou not thy venerable head? 10  
Pity thy children sitting on thy tomb!  
Oh! blot not from the earth an ancient race;  
Thou livest in us, and be it to avenge thee.<sup>81</sup>

These thirteen lines replace twenty-one lines in the Choephoroe in which eight lines of stichomythia are followed by three lines spoken by Orestes and then ten by Electra. In his rewriting of the stichomythia Lockhart has slightly expanded Cho. 489-91 as ll. 1-5;

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81 Bl. i (1817), 150; Cho. 489-509: 'Or. O earth, send up my father to watch my battle! El. O Persephassa, grant us even yet glorious victory! Or. Father, remember the bath, wherewith thou wast robbed of life. El. And remember how they devised a strange casting-net for thee. Or. Thou wast caught, my father, in gyves forged by no smith's hand. El. And in a wrapping shamefully devised. Or. Father, art thou not roused by such taunts as these? El. Dost not uplift that dearest head of thine? Or. Either send Justice to battle for those dear to thee, or grant us in turn to get like grip of them, if indeed after defeat thou wouldst in turn win victory. El. So hearken, father, to this my last appeal as thou beholdest these fledglings crouching at thy tomb. Have compassion on thy offspring, on the woman and at the same time on the male, and let not this seed of Pelops' line be blotted out; for then, in spite of death, thou art not dead. For children are voices of salvation to a man, though he be dead; like corks, they buoy up the net, saving the flaxen cord from out the deep. Hearken! For thine own sake we make this plaint. Show honour to this our plea and thou dost save thyself.' (Weir Smyth)

translated Cho. 492-93 as two lines (ll. 6-7); omitted Cho. 494; expanded Cho. 495 into two lines (ll. 8-9); and translated Cho. 496 as one line (l. 10). Orestes' three-line speech (Cho. 497-99) is then omitted, and Electra's next ten lines are tacked onto her question in Cho. 496 (l. 10), but abbreviated to three lines (Cho. 500-04 = ll. 11-13). Despite this reorganisation, the actual translation is generally close, except that the specific reference in σπέρμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε (Cho. 503: 'this seed of the Pelopidae') is generalised as 'an ancient race' (l. 12) to make it more comprehensible to Lockhart's readers. Also, the last line,

Thou livest in us, and be it to avenge thee,

is formed from two separate Greek lines:

οὕτω γὰρ οὐ τέθνηκας οὐδέ περ θανών (Cho. 504)

and αὐτὸς δὲ σῶζῃ τόνδε τιμήσας λόγον. (Cho. 509)<sup>82</sup>

Of the two passages taken from the Electra, the longest is a translation of the scene in which Electra mourns over the funeral urn, then discovers that Orestes is still alive. As with his version of the scene from the Choephoroe, Lockhart slightly rearranges the long passage of stichomythia in order to retain its dramatic immediacy. His version of Electra's lament compares very favourably with Bland's translation, but is rather uneven in quality:

Ye dear remains of my beloved Orestes,  
Vain were the hopes that shone like thee in brightness,  
When I did send thee hence! Then didst thou bloom,  
Like a sweet flower, in infant loveliness;  
Now art thou withered, not to bloom again.  
Oh! would that I had died when I did send thee  
Into a foreign land — did rescue thee  
From murder; on that day thou might'st have lain

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82 Cho. 504: 'For then, in spite of death, thou art not dead.'  
Cho. 509: 'Show honour to this our plea and thou dost save thyself.'

In the same grave with thy beloved father;  
 But thou hast perished in a foreign country, 10  
 A friendless exile, and I was not near thee.  
 Wretch that I am! I did not with these hands  
 Perfume thy precious corpse, nor did I gather  
 Thy ashes from the pile, as it became me;  
 But thou wert dressed by mercenary hands, 15  
 My star of hope is set. Alas! how fruitless  
 Were the sweet cares with which I tended thee,  
 While yet an infant! For I was to thee  
 A nurse, a mother — I was all to thee.  
 How joy did dance through my delighted veins, 20  
 When, hanging round my neck, thou didst pronounce,  
 With music in my ear, the name of Sister.  
 Thy death has like the whirlwind swept away  
 All that remained to me of love and life.  
 Long have I had no father who could aid me; 25  
 My enemies insult me, and my mother  
 Revels in joy; and thou, who oft didst send  
 Assurance to me that thou wouldst arise  
 The glorious avenger of my wrongs,  
 Shalt never wake to look on me again; 30  
 And for thy beautiful and manly form,  
 And fair affection's smile upon thy face,  
 And thy sweet voice — All I receive is ashes. 83

Taken as a whole, it is a reasonable equivalent of the Greek monologue: Electra's grief; the contrast between death at home and death in exile, between Electra and her mother; the suddenness of Electra's loss and the shrinking of Orestes into dust and ashes. But this has been achieved only by some sacrifice. As usual, Lockhart expands and compresses as he thinks necessary. This is acceptable, bearing in mind the demands of metre and the need to clarify some expressions; but it is less acceptable to omit material, and the addition of new material is rarely justifiable. For instance, he adds a flower-image in ll. 3-5, derived presumably from *λαμπρόν* (El. 1130: 'bright'), and ll. 20-22 are almost entirely invented, although based on El. 1148:

*ἐγὼ δ' ἀδελφῇ καὶ προσηυδώμην ἀεί*

('and by you I was always called "sister"'). But then, when one

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83 B1, i (1817), 151; El. 1126-59. For translation, see notes 22-27 above.

compares ll. 27-33 with El. 1154-59, one must admire the success with which Lockhart has attained the same overall effect as the Greek, with the emphasis on the contrast between former hopes and present bereavement, reaching its climax in l. 33:

And thy sweet voice — All I receive is ashes.<sup>84</sup>

The third article, published in the July number, and comparing the Septem of Aeschylus with the Phoenissae of Euripides,<sup>85</sup> is of interest because it contains Lockhart's only two pieces of translation in metres other than blank verse. Both are translated from choral odes; one, translated into regular anapaests,<sup>86</sup> is rather unexciting, but the other, which seeks to match the Greek dochmiacs with Coleridge's 'Christabel' metre,<sup>87</sup> is more successful at catching the feeling of palpitating fear:

My sinking soul is stricken with fear,  
For the hour of sorrow and death is near.  
The heavy clouds of dust that rise,  
Though dumb, bear tidings through the skies,  
That the dreaded foe has struck his tent,  
And is rushing onward, on ruin bent. (ll. 1-6)<sup>88</sup>

The actual words, though, are less successful than the rhythm.

Lockhart has translated more freely than usual, and with less poetic feeling. Possibly his lack of success with these choral odes caused him to restrict his translations to speeches and dialogue in

84 Compare El. 1158-59.

85 Bl. i (1817), 352-57. The passages translated are: Sept. 42-53, 78-126, 150-55, 288-368, 568-92, 1032-47; and Phoen. 159-69, 304-26, 358-86, 432-37, 446-47, 452-58, 503-23, 1335-49, 1428-59.

86 Bl. i (1817), 354-55 ('Sleep flies from my eyelids. . .'); Sept. 288-368.

87 Bl. i (1817), 354 ('My sinking soul. . .'); Sept. 78-126.

88 Sept. 78-82: 'In my terror I utter loud cries of woe. The host is let loose. Leaving their camp, lo! yonder stream, in full tide, the horsemen coursing in the van. I know it by the dust seen high in air — a speechless, yet clear and truthful harbinger.' (Weir Smyth)



future.

The final article, published in September 1817,<sup>89</sup> looks at only one play, the Philoctetes. As with the Prometheus, Lockhart finds the chief interest to lie in the principal character, and the sympathy which each tragedian seeks to arouse for his chosen hero. Lockhart therefore illustrates his article with five speeches of Philoctetes. One of these is the angry reaction of Philoctetes when Neoptolemus confesses that his true purpose in coming to Lemnos is to take Philoctetes to Troy, by force if necessary. Lockhart's translation begins with these lines:

Destructive as the fire! waker of mischief!  
 Traitor! have I done aught to merit this?  
 Say, art thou not ashamed to look on me,  
 A helpless suppliant who did trust in thee?  
 Who robs me of my bow, robs me of life?  
 Oh, who is he! he will not speak to me;  
 He does not deign me even a look of mercy.  
 Ye lakes, ye promontories, and ye rocks,  
 Haunts of the wild beast of the wilderness,  
 To you again do I address my complaints:  
 Oft have ye seen my tears and heard my cries.  
 See what the cruel man has done to me!  
 He pledged his faith that he would bear me home,  
 And now betrays me to mine enemies. (ll. 1-14)<sup>90</sup>

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89 Bl, i (1817), 593-96. The passages translated are: Phil. 276-313, 468-501, 662-66, 927-58, 1453-64.

90 Bl, i (1817), 595; Phil. 927-44: 'Thou fire, thou utter monster, thou hateful masterpiece of subtle villainy, — how hast thou dealt with me, — how hast thou deceived me! And thou art not ashamed to look upon me, thou wretch, — the suppliant who turned to thee for pity? In taking my bow, thou hast despoiled me of my life. Restore it, I beseech thee, — restore it, I implore thee, my son! By the gods of thy fathers, do not rob me of my life! Ah me! No — he speaks to me no more; he looks away, — he will not give it up! O ye creeks and headlands, O ye wild creatures of the hills with whom I dwell, O ye steep cliffs! to you — for to whom else can I speak? — to you my wonted listeners, I bewail my treatment by the son of Achilles; he swore to convey me home, — to Troy he carries me: he clinched his word with the pledge of his right hand, — yet hath he taken my bow, the sacred bow, once borne by Heracles son of Zeus, — and keeps it, and would fain show it to the Argives as his own.' (Jebb)



As usual, Lockhart rewrites, mixing close translation and paraphrase, omitting and compressing lines as necessary to produce an eloquent piece of English verse carrying the main ideas of the original passage.

In these four articles Lockhart's work is not equally finished, and the last two in particular show signs of haste. The translations from the Phoenissae in the third article are particularly lifeless, but even in the example quoted from the Philoctetes, Lockhart is less painstaking in his transcription of the Greek ideas, and less successful than, say, in the speech quoted from the Prometheus in his handling of blank verse. The reason for this is very likely that when he began the series, he had plenty of time in which to perfect his translations;<sup>91</sup> but as the year advanced he was drawn more and more into writing for, and then editing, Blackwood's Magazine, and began to lose interest in his translations. After he took over as co-editor of the magazine, beginning with the October 1817 number, the series on Greek tragedy was discontinued, and it has long been assumed that the four articles in Blackwood's contain Lockhart's only writing on the subject. This is not so.

Another Edinburgh publisher, Archibald Constable, owned a rival magazine, the Scots Magazine, which in August 1817 began a new series under the title of The Edinburgh Magazine, and Literary Miscellany. Its first editors were none other than Thomas Pringle and James Cleghorn, who had just ended their short term as editors

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91 Marion Lochhead, John Gibson Lockhart, 27, says that at this time Lockhart 'was earning little and. . . had time on his hands which he was glad to use for literature'.

for Blackwood.<sup>92</sup> Among the ideas they brought with them to the Edinburgh Magazine was the conviction that Greek tragedy was a subject of some popular interest. In five consecutive numbers, beginning in October 1817, there appeared six articles on Greek tragedy, of which two were certainly written by Lockhart. The article on Iphigeneia at Aulis in the October number<sup>93</sup> has the same general title, 'Remarks on Greek Tragedy', as Lockhart's series in Blackwood's, and Lockhart's authorship is confirmed by an editorial footnote to another article (not by Lockhart) in the November number.<sup>94</sup> The footnote further announces that another article by 'the same writer' will appear in December. This sixth article by Lockhart duly appeared. Entitled 'Remarks on Greek and French Tragedy', it compares Euripides' Hippolytus with Racine's Phèdre, and includes passages translated from the Greek play. Passages from Phèdre are given in French.<sup>95</sup>

The two articles contributed by Lockhart to the Edinburgh Magazine are executed according to the same principle as those in Blackwood's. Dialogue is condensed, the more complex Greek lines are expanded and clarified, and the purpose is to pick out and

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92 According to D.H. Thomson, The Life and Work of Thomas Pringle, 7, Pringle became co-editor of Constable's magazine on 17 July 1817. A letter from Constable to Cleghorn dated 10 July 1817 (NLS MS 789, p. 806) suggests that Cleghorn was already working for Constable.

93 EdM, i (1817), 240-43. The passages translated are IA. 1-43, 631-80, 1171-1252, 1547-60.

94 EdM, i (1817), 299. Referring to the article on the Philoctetes in Blackwood's, the footnote says, 'The same writer has obliged us with the article on the Iphigenia in Aulis. . . and we have the satisfaction of being enabled to promise our readers a further continuation of his learned and admired "Remarks on Greek Tragedy" in our next number.'

95 EdM, i (1817), 428-37. The passages translated are: Hipp. 73-87, 176-249, 413-25, 1090-99, 1173-93, 1408-14, 1444-60.

reproduce the essential ideas and images of the Greek and present them in a manner equivalent to that of the original. But the quality of these translations is inferior, showing even more signs of haste than was evident in the later translations for Blackwood's. One of the passages chosen from the Hippolytus was the dialogue between Phaedra and her Nurse which Peacock had translated. Lockhart's translation, which is in blank verse, should for that reason have been closer than Peacock's. In fact, it is rather less close, both in letter and spirit. Lockhart's translation of Hipp. 191-96 (the passage in which Peacock imitated Hamlet) is particularly slipshod:

And yet there is a place of refuge for him,  
 A region of repose and happiness, —  
 A home out-shining far the land we know,  
 But it is hid in darkness and in clouds;  
 And thus we cling to life and all the woes  
 Which are our portion here, because we know them.  
 (11. 14-19)<sup>96</sup>

The translation of Hipp. 215-27 is less careless:

Phaedra: Oh! send me to the mountains, to the woods,  
 — The groves of pine, — where the staunch hounds pursue  
 The dapple hinds; yes! by the gods, I love  
 To cheer the chasing dogs with loud halloo,  
 And launch, with steady aim, the hunter's spear.

Nurse: My child, what aileth thee, why speakest thou thus?  
 Say, what hast thou to do with the fleet dogs?  
 Why seek'st thou waters from the forest fountains?  
 Beside the palace is a sloping hill  
 Where thou mayst quench thy thirst with cooling waters.  
 (11. 31-40)<sup>97</sup>

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96 EdM, i (1817), 431; Hipp. 191-96: 'But whatever else there may be that is dearer than life, darkness enwraps it from our sight in cloud. Love-lorn we show ourselves for this glittering something here on earth, through ignorance of another life and the non-revealing of what lies below.' (Barrett) See also note 56 above and compare Peacock's version, Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.217, ll. 27-36.

97 EdM, i (1817), 431. For translation of Hipp. 215-27, see note 51 above, and compare Peacock's version, pp. 243-44 above.

But although he has written a fairly close translation of these lines, his poetic touch is slack and almost prosaic compared with Peacock's version of the same lines. Lockhart was obviously tiring of his translations, which were nothing to the excitement of writing for Blackwood's Magazine.

Lockhart's theory of translation is somewhat similar to that of Peacock: while occasionally accepting word-for-word, line-for-line translation when the similarities of the two languages permit, he is more concerned to catch the essence of his author. He had almost nothing to say about translation theory in his articles on Greek tragedy, his only remark being that 'the inspiration of poetry evaporates at the touch of translation',<sup>98</sup> but he made his principles clear on other occasions. In April 1821 he echoed Denham's dictum quite closely: 'The object should be rather to transfuse than translate; to embody, as it were, the spirit of the original in a new language.'<sup>99</sup> Later he used a metaphor of his own, saying that the translator 'who grapples in this way with the conceptions of another poet, cuts the knot by recasting them in his own mind, and producing as a translation, what is in fact a new poem of his own.'<sup>100</sup> As far as concerns principles of translation, there is no difference between Lockhart and the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century theorists. The difference lies in the execution of the theory: the innovations of Romanticism made possible, for both the translator and his readers, the transcription of Greek

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98 Bl, i (1817), 42.

99 Bl, ix (1821), 3, quoted by Gilbert Macbeth, 'John Gibson Lockhart: a Critical Study', Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, xvii (1935), 48.

100 QR, xlix (1833), 451, quoted by Macbeth, 48.



ideas and imagery which would earlier have been found unacceptable, ridiculous or even incomprehensible. Lockhart's work as a translator of Greek drama is important because it is the first to show the influence of the new poetic theories.

At much the same time as Lockhart's two contributions to the Edinburgh Magazine, there were four other articles on Greek tragedy. This series, appearing in the Edinburgh Magazine monthly from November 1817 till February 1818,<sup>101</sup> appeared anonymously under the title 'Observations on the Agamemnon of Eschylus, Illustrated with Translations', and the first of the series was even given pride of place as the first article in the November number. The author of this series was Robert Morehead (1777-1842), a distant relative of J.G. Lockhart.<sup>102</sup> He studied at Glasgow University, Edinburgh University and as an exhibitioner at Balliol College, Oxford.<sup>103</sup> While at Oxford, he began writing poetry, which he sent to his cousin Francis Jeffrey for criticism.<sup>104</sup> After taking his M.A. in 1802 he entered the church, and became curate at Castle Eaton, Wiltshire.<sup>105</sup> He returned to Edinburgh at the end of 1803, and held various ecclesiastical appointments, eventually becoming Dean of Edinburgh in 1818.<sup>106</sup> Although doubting his own real talent for poetry, he continued to write, his

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101 EdM, i (1817), 299-306, 442-44; ii (1818), 27-31, 112-16.

102 Morehead's mother was Isabella Lockhart, daughter of John Lockhart of Castlehill and Camnethan, Lanarkshire. See Charles Morehead, Memorials of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Robert Morehead, D.D., 1.

103 C. Morehead, Memorials, 44, 60, 66-67.

104 C. Morehead, Memorials, 105-06.

105 C. Morehead, Memorials, 113.

106 C. Morehead, Memorials, 123-26, 165.



main work being a 'poetical memorial' of his own life in the form of a sonnet sequence. He also wrote metrical translations from the Bible, as well as from Greek, Latin, Italian and German.<sup>107</sup> Several of these translations appeared in a small collection of his poetry in 1813, and included a translation in Spenserian stanzas of a choral ode from the Phoenissae.<sup>108</sup> In 1817 he was honoured by election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.<sup>109</sup> In 1832 he was appointed Rector of Easington in Yorkshire, and spent the remainder of his life there. He died in 1842.<sup>110</sup> His connection with the Edinburgh Magazine began in 1817 and continued for some years. A list of his principal contributions to the magazine, which include the 'Observations on the Agamemnon', is given in the biography of Morehead written by his son.<sup>111</sup>

His first translation from Greek tragedy, the choral ode from the Phoenissae, is notable mainly for its virtuosity in converting the original so successfully into a mock-Elizabethan poem. If he intended a translation that retained the spirit of the Greek ode, he has failed; but he has coped well with keeping to the main ideas of the original within the limits of his self-imposed metre. Here is his third stanza:

O woody hill, within whose leafy pride,  
The monsters of the forest have their laire,  
Cithaeron! wherefore from thy snowy side,  
Didst thou restore that infant of despair,

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107 C. Morehead, Memorials, 166-67. The majority of the sonnets are included by C. Morehead in pp. 299-350.

108 Poetical Epistles and Specimens of Translation, 75-78; the passage translated was Phoen. 784-833.

109 C. Morehead, Memorials, 167.

110 C. Morehead, Memorials, 226.

111 C. Morehead, Memorials, 401.

Jocasta's child, expos'd to perish there;  
 And wherefore from thy caverns send that worst  
 Of monsters, Sphinx, with face of virgin fair,  
 And wings, and bestial feet, in furious burst  
 Upon our walls, to vex us with her songs accurst?<sup>112</sup>

In 1817 he turned to what is arguably the greatest Greek tragedy in point of poetic power and originality. There is something of ὕβρις in any attempt to translate such a work, but Morehead has survived the dangers remarkably well, and in his four articles he translates almost half of this long play in most creditable fashion. He begins with a rendering of the prologue that is both lively and accurate:

Would that the gods would free me from my toil,  
 My long year's watch, which on this palace roof  
 I keep, the house of the Atridae, e'en  
 Like to a trusty dog — and have the while  
 Beheld the constant setting and the rise 5  
 Of all the nightly stars, their fair assemblage  
 In the mid sky — and those conspicuous ones  
 Flaming aloft, the shining lords of night,  
 That give to men winter and summer hours. —  
 Even to this day the signal of the light 10  
 I watch — the expected blaze of fire from Troy  
 That is to bring the story to its fall:  
 Happy if that report may cow the heart  
 Of my bad mistress, treacherous to her lord!<sup>113</sup>

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112 Poetical Epistles, 76-77; Phoen. 801-07: 'O beast-haunted glen of sacred leaves, Cithaeron, snow-clad darling of Artemis, I wish you had never nurtured Oedipus, child of Jocasta put out to die, a babe cast out from his home, branded with the bond of a golden brooch-pin; and that the winged maiden, the monster from the mountain, the Sphinx, had not come with its unmusical song.'

113 EdM, i (1817), 300; Ag. 1-11: 'Release from this weary task of mine has been my cry unto the gods throughout my long year's watch, wherein, couchant upon the palace roof of the Atreidae, upon my bended arm, like a hound, I have learned to know aright the conclave of the stars of night, yea those radiant potentates conspicuous in the firmament, bringers of winter and summer unto mankind, the constellations, what time they wane and rise. So now I am still awatch for the signal-flame, the gleaming fire that is to harbinger news from Troy and tidings of its capture. For thus rules my Queen, woman in sanguine heart and man in strength of purpose.' (Weir Smyth) Morehead apparently read κρατεῖν in Ag. 10 and ἐλπίδων in Ag. 11.

He does not often shrink from tackling Aeschylus' powerful but difficult imagery: for example, in this version of the Herald's description of the sufferings of the Greek army at Troy, he begins with a close rendering of the original imagery (ll. 1-8), but then, weakening a little, he rewrites the images in Ag. 570-74 (ll. 9-12), probably hoping for greater clarity:

Then might I tell

Of severe winters, when no bird could live,  
 Drifting from Ida its whole weight of snows;  
 Or summer heats, when not a breeze would stir  
 The billowless sea sleeping before our eyes . . . 5  
 In dazzling noontide ardours — I might tell —  
 But wherefore? — 'tis o'er now — the dead, the dead  
 Feel not these toils beneath their quiet sod —  
 No murmurs come from them — nor need we weep  
 O'er their past sufferings — then, for us who live 10  
 Past sufferings swell the tide of present joys!  
 We have been gainers from them.<sup>114</sup>

His handling of the herald's description of the storm at sea shows the same feature,<sup>115</sup> departing at times from the original imagery, but retaining the overall effect, including the characterisation of the garrulous and ungrammatical herald.

Later, Morehead shows remarkable sensitivity in catching the strange mixture of colloquial speech and high-flown language in Clytemnestra's attempt to persuade Cassandra to enter the palace. In his translation, Clytemnestra begins:

Cl.      This way Cassandra; nay, object not thou

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114 EdM, i (1817), 303; Ag. 563-74: 'And if one were to tell of the wintry cold, past all enduring, when Ida's snow slew the birds; or of the heat, what time upon his waveless noon-day couch, windless the sea sank to sleep — but what need to bewail all this? Our labour's past; past for the dead so that they will never care even to wake to life again. What need for the living to count the number of the slain, what need to repine at fortune's frowns? I hold it fitting that our misfortunes bid us a long farewell. For us, the remnant of the Argive host, the gain hath the advantage and the loss does not bear down the scale.' (Weir Smyth)

115 EdM, i (1817), 304; Ag. 653-74.

To enter, where great Jove has cast thy lot,  
 This house, where harshness is unknown, and join  
 The other female slaves, thy comrades, getting  
 Thy portion of the household work and diet. 5  
 Alight thee from the litter, be not haughty!  
 Alcmene's son himself, they say, was sold  
 To servitude.<sup>116</sup>

Then, as Cassandra continues to ignore her, she grows impatient:

- Cl. I cannot wait for her 25  
 Standing out of doors all day; the central hearth  
 Is crowded with our victims, sheep to be offered  
 Before its fires; and meet, since unexpected,  
 This day's great boon. If thou wilt come, come quickly; —  
 If thou art ignorant of what my words 30  
 Import, at least thou might'st betoken so  
 By some outlandish motion of thy hand!
- Cho. Such as they are, her motions much require  
 Interpreter — like new caught beast she struggles.
- Cl. Nay, she is mad, I think; the spectacle 35  
 Of ravage in her city, and the thought  
 Of what she has left, have fairly crazed her wits!  
 She must foam off her rage and bloody froth  
 Against the bit, ere she will learn to bear it,  
 But I can trifle with her no longer!<sup>117</sup> 40

Some of the other translators in this chapter have been inclined to overwrite the more macabre lines in their chosen author. Morehead had the sense to avoid this — a permanent temptation, surely, in the Agamemnon — as in his version of Clytemnestra's

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116 EdM, ii (1818), 28; Ag. 1035-41: 'Get thee within, thou too, Cassandra; since in no unkindness hath Zeus appointed thee a partaker in the holy water of a house where thou mayest take thy stand, with many another slave, at the altar of the god who guards its wealth. Dismount thee from the car and be not overproud; for even Alcmene's son, men say, in days of old endured to be sold.' (Weir Smyth)

117 Ag. 1055-68: 'Cl. I have no leisure — mark me that — to dally with this woman here outside; for already the victims stand by the central hearth awaiting the sacrifice — a joy we never expected to be ours. As for thee, if thou wilt take any part therein, make no delay. But if, failing to understand, thou dost not catch my meaning, then, instead of speech, make sign with thy barbarian hand. Cho. 'Tis an interpreter and a plain one that the stranger seems to need. She bears herself like a wild creature newly captured. Cl. Nay, mad she is and hearkens to her wild mood, since she hath come hither from a city newly captured, and knoweth not how to brook the curb until she hath foamed away her fretfulness in blood. No! I will waste no more words upon her to be insulted thus.' (Weir Smyth)



cold-blooded description of how she killed her husband, where he is again successful in combining both literal and spirited translation:

I struck him twice — and after two loud shrieks  
 His legs gave way — he fell — again I struck him  
 Flat on the ground — that was a votive blow  
 To Pluto, the receiver of the dead!  
 And so his breath departed — and his lungs  
 Panting and heaving, spurted the black blood  
 Quick from his wound, and sprinkled me all o'er  
 With those red dew-drops — grateful to my sense —  
 As is the shower of Jove, to earth's hot breast  
 When the flower-cups are opening! — Wish ye joy,  
 Senators of Argos — welcome are ye all  
 To have part in my great joy, — If not, alone  
 I will rejoice — yea, and were all things ready,  
 Libations would I offer to the Gods  
 Standing above the dead! O meet it was  
 The cup of domestic evil which he filled  
 To the brim — he now should drink down to the dregs,  
 And feel its curses bitter in his lips.<sup>118</sup>

So much for the translation into blank verse of the speeches and dialogues. But any translator of this play has also the formidable task of tackling the long lyric passages, full alike of great beauty and terrifying difficulty, many of which are unequalled elsewhere in Greek tragedy. To translate them with any degree of success requires no small talent, but again Morehead has done remarkably well in producing close equivalents in sound, sense

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118 EdM, ii (1818), 113; Ag. 1384-98: 'Twice I smote him, and with two groans his limbs relaxed. Once he had fallen, I dealt him yet a third stroke to grace my prayer to the infernal Zeus, the saviour of the dead. Fallen thus, he gasped away his life, and as he breathed forth quick spurts of blood, he smote me with dark drops of ensanguined dew; while I rejoiced no less than the sown earth is gladdened in heaven's refreshing rain at the birth-time of the flower buds. Since then the case stands thus, ye Argive ancients, rejoice ye, if ye would rejoice; as for me, I glory in the deed. And had it been a fitting act to pour libations on the corpse, over him this had been done justly, aye more than justly. With so many accursed ills hath he filled the mixing-bowl in his own house, and now he hath come home and himself drained it to the dregs.' (Weir Smyth)



and spirit. Here is a stanza which he translates from the parodos:

Meantime the flower of all the land departed.  
 We poor old wrinkled creatures, feeble hearted,  
 Yea, children more than half,  
 Move, propping our weak limbs upon a staff!  
 The youthful juices of our joints all sunk  
 In stiffening age — our warrior sinews shrunk!  
 Such is life's dreary fall,  
 Its foliage withering all,  
 And dropping off apace.  
 Three-footed creeping takes the place  
 Of the twin runners of the race:  
 Like infancy we seem,  
 Or rather like a dream  
 Wandering unhallowed in the day's bright beam.<sup>119</sup>

From the second stasimon,<sup>120</sup> he translates three passages, from which I have chosen part of the first and all of the third. The first contains the notorious pun on Helen's name, which, says Morehead, 'although it cannot well be translated, may yet be imitated'. After explaining the significance given to names by the Greeks, he suggests that Aeschylus has probably gone too far in offering 'no less than three puns upon one poor lady's name', and deprecatingly introduces his own version with the wish that it had been 'more in his power to transfuse' the 'very fine lyrical spirit' of the Greek:

O hellish is her name and nature.  
 Some foresight o'er his spirit came,  
 Who first to that fair perjured creature,  
 Gave Helen for a name!  
 Before her steps hell's caverns gaping  
 In tempest, combat, siege and rapine,  
 Men, cities, fleets, have swallowed,  
 Since first smooth Zephyr filled her sails,

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119 EdM, i (1817), 301; Ag. 72-82: 'But we, incapable of service by reason of our aged frame, discarded from that martial mustering of long ago, bide here at home, supporting on our staves a strength like unto a child's. For as the vigour of youth, leaping up within the breast, is like unto that of age, since the war-god is not in his place; so over-age, its leafage already withering, goeth its way on triple feet, and, no better than a child, wandereth, a dream that is dreamed by day.' (Weir Smyth)

120 Ag. 681-781.

And flying from her home and marriage-bed,  
She gave her wanton tresses to the gales!<sup>121</sup>

The final stanza of this ode, with its moral comment that virtue is often more at home in the dwellings of the poor, is likened by Morehead to similar sentiments in Burns:

Not so the life, howe'er obscurely  
Passed in the hovel's smoky gloom,  
If virtue light her lamp, that purely  
The cottage can illumine!  
While from the gilded roofs retiring,  
Where Pride with unclean hands aspiring,  
Climbs to some glittering false reward —  
She passes on to holier home,  
Cheering the peasant's lot, though seeming hard,  
Darkening the columns of the lordly dome!<sup>122</sup>

Finally, there is the long scene in which Cassandra prophesies Agamemnon's death and her own as the Chorus listen in horror. Morehead gives the scene in its entirety, and makes no comment other than that 'this noble scene' requires none.<sup>123</sup> Again, Morehead resists the temptation to overwrite, and although this time he has not quite succeeded in rising to the heights of his author, his translation is competent, and not unfaithful to the imagery and ideas of Aeschylus. Here are the stanzas in which

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121 EdM, i (1817), 304; Ag. 681-92: 'Who can have given a name so altogether true — was it some power invisible guiding his tongue aright by forecasting of destiny? who named that bride of the spear and source of strife with the name of Helen? For, true to her name, a Hell she proved to ships, Hell to men, Hell to city, when stepping forth from her delicate and costly-curtained bower, she sailed the sea before the breath of earth-born Zephyrus.' (Weir Smyth) It is a fortunate coincidence that a similar pun on Helen's name can be made in English.

122 EdM, i (1817), 305; Ag. 772-81: 'But Righteousness shineth in smoke-begrimed dwellings and holdeth in esteem him that is virtuous. From gold-bespangled mansions, where men's hands are defiled, she departeth with averted eyes and taketh her way to pure homes; she worships not the power of wealth stamped counterfeit by the praise of men, and she guideth all things to their proper end.' (Weir Smyth)

123 EdM, ii (1818), 28-31; Ag. 1069-1330.

Cassandra makes oracular reference to the imminent murders in words which perplex the listening chorus:

Cas. Ah! see, see — guard the lordly bull  
From the smooth cunning heifer!  
The robe is folded round him; see the tool  
Of slaughter in her hand, — he falls, he falls.  
The field of battle than the bath was safer!  
I say the bath, the bath, — hear ye my calls?

Cho. I hear, and that some evil they foretell  
I can see well,  
Tho' little skilled in what soothsaying teaches!  
Ah! when was good to man in its dark speeches  
Conveyed? However by the cloud of years  
Hallowed, evil alone, no good in them appears!

Cas. Woe, woe, — my own black doom is now advancing,  
Before my mind's eye glancing!  
Was it to die with thee thou broughtest me here?  
For nothing else I fear!

Cho. O thou perturbed spirit, borne along  
By divine impulse in prophetic song,  
Now thine own misery singing, —  
Like nightingale, redoubling her complaint  
Each night, and all night long,  
With voice that will not faint,  
The ceaseless changes of her sorrows ringing.<sup>124</sup>

It is a great pity that such a good translation was left incomplete, and published in a struggling magazine whose circulation, despite the considerable efforts of Constable to push its sales on both sides of the border, did not rise much above

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124 EdM, ii (1818), 29; Ag. 1125-45: 'Cas. Ha, ha, see there, see there! Keep the bull from his mate! She hath caught him in the robe and gores him with the crafty device of her black horn! He falls in a vessel of water! It is of doom wrought by guile in a murderous bath that I am telling thee. Cho. I cannot vaunt myself a keen judge of prophecies; but these, methinks, spell some evil. But from prophecies what word of good ever comes to mortals? Through terms of evil their wordy arts bring men to know fear chanted in prophetic strains. Cas. Alas, alas, the sorrow of my ill-starred doom! For 'tis mine own affliction, crowning the cup, that I bewail. Ah, to what end didst thou bring me hither, unhappy that I am? For naught save to die — and not alone. What else? Cho. Frenzied in soul thou art, by some god possessed, and dost wail in wild strains thine own fate, like some brown nightingale that never ceases making lament (ah me!), and in the misery of her heart moans, Itys, Itys, throughout all her days abounding in sorrow.' (Weir Smyth)

1800 at the end of 1817.<sup>125</sup> The loss is even more obvious when one turns for comparison to the only new full-length translation of Greek tragedy to be published in these years. This was William Drennan's translation of the Electra of Sophocles, published in Belfast in 1817.

William Drennan (1754-1820)<sup>126</sup> was born in Belfast and educated at the Universities of Glasgow (M.A., 1771) and Edinburgh (M.D., 1778). He returned to Ireland to practise medicine and settled in Dublin in 1789. Here he took an interest in literature and politics, and became a leading member of the United Irishmen. The latter activity led to his trial and eventual acquittal on a charge of sedition in 1794, after which time he found it prudent to limit his spare-time interests to literature. In 1807 he moved back to Belfast, where he gave up medicine. He wrote more poetry, helped to found the Belfast Academical Institution (to which he contributed generously 'with heart and hand, time, purse and pen')<sup>127</sup> and started the Belfast Magazine. Apart from his translation of the Electra, he translated three other short extracts from Greek tragedy, whose precise source I have been unable to identify.<sup>128</sup> He died in 1820.

It is not clear why Drennan decided to publish his Electra,

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125 Nothing seems to have been published about Constable's Edinburgh Magazine, but Constable's letter-books, now in the National Library of Scotland, contain a wealth of information on the subject. See NLS MSS 672-673, 789-792, especially MS 790, pp. 82-83, 362-64.

126 Biographical information on Drennan is taken from the DNB unless otherwise indicated.

127 William Drennan, Glendalloch and Other Poems, xiii.

128 Glendalloch, and Other Poems, 14-16. One piece is titled 'Fragment of Sophocles'; the other two are 'From Euripides'. They appear to have been chosen for their moral and religious content.



which probably came out in the Spring of 1817.<sup>129</sup> Parry thinks that the translation was intended for use at Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>130</sup> This is improbable, since Drennan was no longer living in Dublin, but he may have written it for the students of the Belfast Academical Institution. At any rate, he dedicated the translation to his friend Andrew O'Beirne, who taught Hebrew and Classics at the Institution.<sup>131</sup> As for his choice of play, he doubtless found Sophocles more congenial to him in his later years, as did Coleridge.<sup>132</sup> In the preface, Drennan writes with enthusiasm about the variety of characterisation in the play, its moral and religious content, and its particular suitability for private reading.<sup>133</sup>

Drennan's principles of translation are familiar: 'I have attempted to transfuse into our language, the spirit, as well as the sense of the Electra', and it is in order not to lose any of this spirit, he says, that he has 'dilated the sense of some passages, and contracted that of others', since even the closest translation, because it has no air of originality, is 'no longer faithful'.<sup>134</sup> Unfortunately, it is the originality of Drennan, such as it is, and not the originality of Sophocles, that comes across in his translation, as will soon be made clear.

Read simply as poetry, Drennan's Electra is not unsuccessful.

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129 The preface is dated 17 March, 1817. See Drennan's Electra, vi.

130 Parry, 46.

131 Drennan's Electra, iii.

132 Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism, ed. T.M. Raysor, 421.

133 Drennan's Electra, v-vi.

134 Drennan's Electra, v-vi.



The blank verse is readable, flexible and free from the pseudo-Shakespearean language that many second-rate poets thought appropriate to tragedy. Drennan is at his best in passages of simple discussion or straightforward description, as in Electra's surprisingly matter-of-fact account of the sacrifice of her sister Iphigeneia:

Ask then the huntress-god, for whose offence  
 She held so long the captive winds at Aulis?  
 The virgin may disdain to answer thee! — I will.  
 Hast thou not heard, that once my father, sporting  
 In Dian's sacred groves, roused from his lair 5  
 Her stag, of branching horn and dappled coat,  
 Which he slew, boastful, reckless of the goddess?  
 For this, th' offended power kept back the fleet,  
 Until atonement at her altar made  
 By sacrifice of what he valued most — his daughter! 10  
 So they both suffered; nor by other means  
 Could our ships sail to Troy, or home return. 135

The translation is close, the tone is the same, and nothing entirely superfluous is added. The specific references to *Λητώα κόρη* (El. 570: 'Leto's daughter') and *Ἀχαιοί* (El. 571: 'Achaeans') are generalised to 'Th' offended power' and 'the fleet' (l. 8) for no good reason, since there is nothing difficult or obscure in the original phrases. Apart from this, the only flaw is the occasional elliptical expression, such as in l. 9, where the sense is 'until he made atonement at her altar'. Ellipsis is not uncommon in Drennan's translation.

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135 Drennan's *Electra*, 37; El. 563-74: 'Ask the huntress Artemis what sin she punished when she stayed the frequent winds at Aulis; or I will tell thee; for we may not learn from her. My father — so I have heard — was once disporting himself in the grove of the goddess, when his footfall startled a dappled and antlered stag; he shot it, and chanced to utter a certain boast concerning its slaughter. Wroth thereat, the daughter of Leto detained the Greeks, that, in quittance for the wild creature's life, my father should yield up the life of his own child. Thus it befell that she was sacrificed; since the fleet had no other release, homeward or to Troy.' (Jebb)

His most serious fault, though, is in seeking to improve his work by adding adjectival phrases here and there. They are often intended to embellish a Greek expression whose simplicity offends his ear, but their usual effect is to sentimentalise and even muffle the emotional clarity of Sophocles. This is exactly what happens in his version of Electra's speech over the urn:

Thou sad memorial of the best of men!  
 All that remains of my Orestes!  
 How dashed from hopes in which I sent thee forth,  
 Light of all eyes! thus, thus to bring thee  
 Back to these arms — a meagre heap of dust! 5  
 Oh, had my life been ended on that day  
 When I first sent thee, boy, to stranger land,  
 And stole thee from that slaughter-house, our home!  
 Then, though in death, thou still might have secured  
 A due partition of paternal tomb; 10  
 But thou hast perished in a foreign land,  
 Far from thy home, and far from me, thy sister!  
 She has not paid thy body decent rites;  
 "With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs washed off  
 The clotted gore," nor borne in haste away 15  
 All that was left of all-consuming fire,  
 A little urn-full of a little dust.  
 Ah, wretched sister! vain and profitless  
 All those dear cherishings, those labours sweet,  
 Bestowed on thee, my brother, and my child — 20  
 For mine to thee was more than mother's love!  
 I was your sister, parent, and your nurse;  
 I fed, I fondled thee; lived in thy smiles,  
 And caroled in thy ears — all is now gone!  
 All, in one hour, as with a sweeping wind, 25  
 Scattered and lost, and dead with thee, my brother!  
 My father long since gone; and I to thee  
 Am as the dead, and you to me — but dust;  
 The scoff and laughter of our enemies!  
 Our mother (how can I call that she a mother!) 30  
 Madd'ning with joy, on whom how often said  
 You'd come your father's great avenger!  
 Hard fate hath robbed both me and thee  
 Of this just vengeance; and, instead, hath sent me  
 These few grey ashes, and a shadowy name.<sup>136</sup> 35

Drennan has strained too hard, and with scant success, to raise his poetry to a higher emotional level. He overdoes the macabre touch

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136 Drennan's *Electra*, 61-62; *El.* 1126-59. For translation, see notes 22-27 above.

in translating φόνου (El. 1133: 'murder') as 'that slaughter-house, our home' (l. 8), and adding 'clotted gore' (l. 15). There are ellipses in lines 3-5, 9 and 31-32. In lines 3-5 he so expands as to lose the contrast of ἐξέπεμπον εἰσεδεξάμην (El. 1127). Lines 18-24 are an unnecessarily free paraphrase of El. 1143-48. And in lines 34-35 his expansion has lost the effective build-up to the simple but telling last phrase, σποδόν τε καὶ κκίαν ἀνωφελῇ (El. 1159).

In his translation of the choral odes, Drennan makes no attempt to do anything but write free paraphrase. He always uses tetrameter couplets, with very occasional variations in line length and rhyme scheme. Where his blank verse was occasionally sentimentalised, his choral odes are overtly Augustan. In her first lyric passage, Electra is made to address the day as follows:

Witness, thou blessed eye of day,  
That wakes this earth with orient ray, —  
Witness thou soft-embracing air,  
To lorn Electra's deep despair!  
Witness, this bosom stained with blows,  
And the diurnal round of unremitting woes!  
Let watchings of the night attest,  
And couch long strange to welcome rest,  
How strong she holds, in love and hate,  
The memory of her father's fate!<sup>137</sup>

Later lyric passages are even more freely translated, and the tendency to overwrite becomes more pronounced. Drennan's expanded description of the Erinyes in El. 1384-90, where they are described as ἄφυκτοι κύνες (El. 1388: 'dogs from which there is no escape'), is worthy of the Hound of the Baskervilles:

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137 Drennan's Electra, 13; El. 86-95: 'O thou pure sunlight, and thou air, earth's canopy, how often have ye heard the strains of my lament, the wild blows dealt against this bleeding breast, when dark night fails! And my wretched couch in yonder house of woe knows well, ere now, how I keep the watches of the night, — how often I bewail my hapless sire.' (Jebb)

Lo! the war-god leads the way,  
 Close at his heels the dogs of prey,  
 With heads low hung, and ears elate,  
 Not spending mouth, but breathing fate!  
 Full of purpose, fair and good,  
 Till flesh'd their fangs in guilty blood.  
 Now they thread yon portal wide,  
 Now they seek the homicide!  
 Our dream will have a substance soon,  
 And our black night become bright noon.<sup>138</sup>

Drennan's worthy but unsuccessful attempt seems to have had few readers. Only the Monthly Review found any space for it, and concluded that Drennan had done nothing that had not been better done by Potter and Francklin.<sup>139</sup> This is a fair criticism if the eighteenth-century idiom of Potter and Francklin can still be regarded as acceptable poetic idiom, but the language used by Lockhart and Morehead gives ample proof that, even for translations, the currents of taste were running in a new direction, and that Lockhart and Morehead were the forerunners, in Greek tragedy at least, of the Romantic style of poetic translation.

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138 Drennan's Electra, 72; El. 1384-90: 'Behold how Ares moves onward, breathing deadly vengeance against which none may strive! Even now the pursuers of dark guilt have passed beneath yon roof, the hounds which none may flee. Therefore the vision of my soul shall not long tarry in suspense.'  
 (Jebb)

139 MR, lxxxix (1819), 26-30.

## CHAPTER 9. THE VERSE TRANSLATIONS: STEADY PROGRESS, 1819-1830

What astonishing people those Greek dramatists were!  
I am just now reading Potter's 'Aeschylus' with the  
intensity of admiration with which you would look at  
the frescoes of Michael Angelo. (31 October 1821)

A.G. L'Estrange, Life of Mary  
Russell Mitford, II.138.

After the flurry of activity in 1817 there was a short lull, broken by the publication of Smith's The House of Atreus and the House of Laius in 1819.<sup>1</sup> While at Eton, John Smith had collaborated with Frere, Canning and others to produce the Microcosm in 1786 and 1787. Smith then went to King's College, Cambridge, and afterwards studied law for a short time before joining the army in 1793. He left the army in 1797, and after a brief period as an M.P. he was appointed Paymaster General in Jamaica. On his return to England in 1803 he became Paymaster of the Navy, a post which he held until his death in 1827. Apart from The House of Atreus, Smith also published a few books on architecture.<sup>2</sup>

Something has already been said about Smith's book in Chapter 6, and the purpose here is to look more closely at his technique of free imitation which he himself described in the preface to The House of Laius: 'The passages selected, have been rather freely imitated than translated, and the property of each Author has been

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1 See Chapter 6, pp. 162-63.

2 GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1827), 366-67.



Figure 5 Verse Translations and Translators, 1819-1830

<u>Date</u>	<u>Work or Passage(s) Translated</u>	<u>Translator</u>
1819	<u>Eum.</u> 34-73, 94-142, 179-90, 307-96.	J. Smith
1820	<u>OC.</u> 234-86, 1414-46, 1556-78	T. Dale
1821	<u>Med.</u> 1-48 <u>Eum.</u> 1-234 [ <u>Aj.</u> 596-645]	J. Brown ?R. Morehead W.M. Praed]
1823	<u>Ag.</u> 855-1454, <u>Or.</u> 71-347, Soph. <u>El.</u> 1098-1504 <u>Med.</u> 1002-80	C.A. Elton ?H.S. Van Dyk
1824	Aeschylus, <u>Agamemnon</u> Sophocles, <u>Tragedies</u>	J. Symmons T. Dale
1825	Soph. <u>El.</u> 1126-70	H.S. Boyd
1827	<u>OT.</u> 463-511 Aeschylus, <u>Prometheus</u>	Anon. T. Medwin
1828	<u>Or.</u> 211-315	'J.D'
1829	Aeschylus, <u>Agamemnon</u> Aeschylus, <u>Persae</u> <u>Hec.</u> 59-97, 177-215, 905-32	J. Kennedy W. Palin R.A. Willmott
1830	<u>Hec.</u> 154-76; <u>Or.</u> 136-75; <u>Phil.</u> 170-90	R.A. Willmott

- Note:
1. Items in square brackets were not published during the period in question.
  2. Medwin's Prometheus (1827) was published in Siena. It is included in Chapter 10 with Medwin's other translations.

scrupulously marked, that where I have deviated into originality, my sins may rest on my own shoulders.'<sup>3</sup> This technique can be illustrated from the second Act of The House of Atreus, which he called 'The Funeral Offerings'. In this, Smith has included pieces from the Choephoroe and the Electra plays of Sophocles and Euripides, as well as 'such parts of the Eumenides, as it was thought would bear modern representation'.<sup>4</sup> The first scene, from the entry of Electra and some attendants taking libations to Agamemnon's tomb up to Electra's prayer for the return of Orestes, comes from Cho. 22-151. The arrival of Chrysothemis and her dialogue with Electra is from Soph. El. 328-471. The character called Phocyas, who now brings news of the death of Orestes in Phocis, replaces the Paedagogus in Sophocles' play, and speaks an eleven-line version of Sophocles' description of the chariot race in which Orestes is supposed to have died. For this scene Smith uses Soph. El. 660-799, but excludes Clytemnestra. Almost at once, Orestes enters with the funeral urn. Electra speaks a few words over the urn, then, as Orestes steps forward to identify himself, Electra ignores him and gives Chrysothemis (who has never left the scene) another piece of her mind. Here, Smith mixes together Soph. El. 947-1057 and 1126-70. Chrysothemis now enters the palace, after which Orestes is allowed to reveal his identity in a scene which combines Soph. El. 1171-1226 and 1288-1325 with Cho. 212-63. At this point Phocyas returns and urges them to enter the palace. Here, Smith draws on his own imagination, making Electra urge on the hesitant Orestes to avenge their father. Orestes

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3 House of Laius, xx.

4 House of Atreus, xxxii.

enters the palace, a shriek is heard, and Orestes returns with a drawn sword. He describes the murder of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus in a speech drawn from Eur. El. 1206-23. Finally, in a short scene based on Cho. 1048-60, Orestes sees the furies and is led away by Electra and Phocylas. The scene now changes to the temple of Apollo at Delphi, where Orestes is discovered sitting by the altar. He conducts a conversation with the invisible Eumenides, who chant their reply off-stage. Apart from the final chant of the Eumenides telling Orestes to seek another temple far over the seas, which alludes to the plot of the Iphigeneia in Tauris, Smith adapts material from several choral odes in the Eumenides for this final scene.

The mixture which Smith has concocted is hopelessly confused and lacks any dramatic merit. There are times when his salmagundi reads rather like the 'bad quarto' of Hamlet. The scene in which Electra laments over the funeral urn, familiar from the versions of Soph. El. 1126-70 quoted in Chapter 8, is reduced to the following incoherent snippet:

Let me embrace that urn, the petty bound  
 Of all that was Orestes, and the tomb  
 Of all my hopes! — not with such hope, brave Soul,  
 I stole thee from this house of blood and crime,  
 My orphan charge. O, then I fondly thought  
 Thy manly growth would visit us again  
 For other purposes — but now thy dust,  
 A little dust, is light as thy brave Father's.  
 Thy mother loved thee, as she now loves me,  
 And when she hears the cheerful news, she'll leap,  
 And wanton in her fierce unmotherly joy  
 She'll hug Aegisthus, and exulting show  
 This pledge of safety to my sorrowing sight.<sup>5</sup>

Smith's book was reviewed in the Monthly Review and British Critic, both of which agreed that Smith's efforts were futile and

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5 House of Atreus, 46-47.

no substitute for already existing translations.<sup>6</sup> If Smith had attempted a translation proper rather than this ineffectual rewrite of the original plays, he might have produced a book more worthy of attention. In fact, he included passages translated from the Eumenides in his introduction, apparently to compensate for the reduced role the Eumenides play in his House of Atreus.<sup>7</sup> He has given a fairly close translation, and shows some capacity for handling blank verse; but although he has chosen passages for their dramatic power, his versions are rather dull. For example:

A dreadful sight to see and to relate  
Has driven me within: my failing legs  
Bend helpless, and refuse their wonted step:  
For fearful age sinks me beneath a child.  
Now as I gently crept, where laurel-crowned  
The Sanctuary stands, I saw a shape  
Seated upon the marble seat, which marks  
Our central Earth: his presence stains the Fane:  
For in one gory hand his sheathless sword  
Yet smokes, and t'other holds an olive-branch  
Entwined with wool, the guilty suppliant's sign:  
And round this man a wondrous guard there sleeps  
Of female forms: I cannot call them Women,  
Nor those, whose pictured ugliness I've seen,  
The Gorgon Harpy race: for these are wingless,  
Dark, unapproachable to human sense:  
Seated upright, each on their separate seat  
They sleep an anxious sleep, and from their eyes  
Venom distils: their habit, to approach  
The Godhead's image, or the roof of man,  
Strange and unseemly.<sup>8</sup>

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6 MR, xcii (1820), 87-95; BC, n.s., xi (1819), 656-64.

7 House of Atreus, xxxix-xlviii; Eum. 34-73, 94-142, 179-90, 307-96.

8 House of Atreus, xxxix-xi; Eum. 34-54: 'Horrible! Horrors to relate, horrors for my eyes to behold, have sent me back from the house of Loxias; so that I have no strength left in me nor can I go upright. I run with the aid of my hands, not with any nimbleness of limb; for an aged woman, overcome with fright, is a thing of naught — nay rather, she is but as a child. I was on my way to the inner shrine, enriched with many a wreath, when, on the centre-stone, I beheld a man defiled before Heaven occupying the seat of suppliants. His hands were dripping gore; he held a sword just drawn and a lofty olive-branch reverently crowned with a tuft of wool exceeding large — white was the



There is an air of polished elegance about these translations that suggests they were done mainly for recreation. At any rate, Smith does not appear to have written any more.

In 1820 Thomas Dale published a book of poetry which included three passages translated from the Oedipus Coloneus.<sup>9</sup> These were intended as a specimen of a projected translation of all the extant plays of Sophocles. Thomas Dale (1797-1870) was orphaned before the age of five, but had the good fortune to be cared for by family friends, who secured him a place at Christ's Hospital. From there he went on to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, graduating B.A. in 1822 and M.A. in 1826. While still a student, he published one or two small volumes of poetry, whose success helped finance his studies and enabled him to marry the daughter of his publisher in 1819. In 1822 he was ordained as a curate, and thereafter held a succession of ecclesiastical posts including that of Canon of St Paul's Cathedral (1843) and finally Dean of Rochester (1870).<sup>10</sup>

Two of the passages Dale published in 1820 show considerable differences from those in the complete two-volume translation

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fleece; for as to this I can speak clearly. Before this man there sat asleep on thrones a wondrous throng of women. No! women they were surely not, Gorgons I rather call them. Nor yet can I liken them to forms of Gorgons either. Once ere this I saw some pictured creatures carrying off the feast of Phineus — but these are wingless, sable, and altogether detestable. Their snorting nostrils blow forth fearsome blasts, and from their eyes oozes a loathly rheum. Their garb, too, was such as is unfit to bring before the statues of the gods or into the abodes of men.' (Weir Smyth)

9 Thomas Dale, The Outlaw of Taurus. A Poem. To which are added, Scenes from Sophocles, 113-20. The passages are: OC. 234-86, 1414-46, 1556-78.

10 DNB.



published in 1824. One of these, a blank-verse translation of the lyric passage in which the Chorus tries to drive Oedipus and Antigone away,<sup>11</sup> is particularly free, making the common fault of elaborating what in Sophocles is effective because of its simplicity. Here, for example, is Antigone's plea to the Chorus to be merciful:

Oh! yet one moment, venerable strangers!  
 Although ye shrunk recoiling from the words  
 Of my poor aged Father, while he told  
 Of deeds most foul — yet most reluctant too —  
 I do conjure you, turn not thus from me, 5  
 While here, in bitter anguish, I implore  
 Your pity for my Sire. With eye undimmed  
 Save by continual tears, do I behold you!  
 Look on me as your own beloved daughter;  
 Think, think you hear her pleading for a parent, 10  
 And let the tender thought excite your mercy!  
 On you alone, as on the Gods, our hopes,  
 Our latest hopes depend. Oh, then relent!  
 And grant the boon I dare not yet expect,  
 But cannot cease to hope. I would implore you 15  
 By each fond tie affection loves to cherish;  
 Your infant-offspring, your paternal home,  
 Your smiling wife — your country's patron-God!  
 Where will ye find the man who can escape  
 When Heaven itself constrains him?<sup>12</sup> 20

Some of the added words and phrases are probably intended to give the reader some of the background information which would be needed in a translation of the whole play — for example, 'yet one moment' (l. 1) and possibly 'from the words' (l. 2). Some are

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11 Outlaw of Taurus, 113-16; OC. 234-86.

12 Outlaw of Taurus, 114; OC. 237-53: 'Strangers of reverent soul, since ye have not borne with mine aged father, — knowing, as ye do, the rumour of his unpurposed deeds, — pity, at least, my hapless self, I implore you, who supplicate you for my sire alone, — supplicate you with eyes that can still look on your own, even as though I were sprung from your own blood, that the sufferer may find compassion. On you, as on a god, we depend in our misery. Nay, hear us! grant the boon for which we scarce dare hope! By everything sprung from you that ye hold dear, I implore you, yea, by child — by wife, or treasure, or god! Look well, and thou wilt not find the mortal who, if a god should lead him on, could escape.' (Jebb)

also there as an easy way of filling out the line, such as 'from the words' (l. 2) and 'our latest hopes' (l. 13), which are tautologous, as well as 'but cannot cease to hope' (l. 15) and 'country's patron' (l. 18). But most of them are deliberately inserted for their connotations of pathos: 'most foul' (l. 4), 'save by continual tears' (l. 8), 'beloved' (l. 9), 'infant' (l. 17) and 'smiling' (l. 18). Line 10 is added for the same reason.

Taken for what it is, a specimen rather than a finished translation, it is promising enough, and earned words of encouragement from the Monthly Review, which tempered its praise with the warning that Dale should try to keep more closely to the 'character and flow of the original measures' and avoid too much expansion, in order to convey most accurately the thought and style of Sophocles.<sup>13</sup> Encouraged by the reception of his specimen translation, and supported by a number of subscribers, Dale spent his spare time in the next three years improving and completing his translation of Sophocles.

Meanwhile, in June 1821, two magazines published passages of Greek tragedy in translation. The shorter translation, by a certain Rev. James Brown, was published in the Monthly Magazine, prefaced by Brown's statement that he had tried to 'infuse' the 'unambitious but interesting simplicity' of the original into his translation.<sup>14</sup> The passage translated is the prologue of the Medea, and Brown seems to have interpreted 'simplicity' as requiring feebly rhymed free paraphrase in an outdated poetic

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13 MR, xcvi (1821), 99-101.

14 MM, li (1821), 439-40; Med. 1-48.

style. He begins like this:

O, that with vent'rous speed, far from this land,  
Argo had never moor'd in Colchis' Strand,  
 Nor Peleon's groves supplied his planks of pine,  
 To form this first rate of the Grecian line,  
 Mann'd with heroic chiefs both wise and bold,  
 The far-famed fleece to win of massy gold,  
 Iolco's towers Medea had not seen,  
 Nor Jason fir'd the affections of a Queen.  
 Corinth, the imperial race would ne'er have known,  
 Whose Princess by strong charms her favour won.  
 Medea smil'd, when Jason yet was kind,  
 And gave to fondness all her mighty mind.<sup>15</sup>

The other translation appeared in the Edinburgh Magazine,<sup>16</sup> and was probably by Morehead, whose translations from the Agamemnon had already appeared in the same magazine,<sup>17</sup> and who was now its editor. Like Blackwood, Constable had found Pringle and Cleghorn impossible to work with, and after a long wrangle over their terms of employment had got rid of them early in 1819.<sup>18</sup> Morehead took over in or just before April 1819 and resigned at the end of June 1821, apparently feeling that he was not sufficiently in touch with the public mind to be able to reverse the constantly declining circulation figures.<sup>19</sup> The translation from the Eumenides in the June number, if it was by Morehead, was his last work as editor.

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15 MM, li (1821), 439; Med. 1-13: 'I wish that the ship Argo had not flown through the blue Symplegades to the land of Colchis, and that the hewn pine had never fallen in the glens of Pelion, nor put oars in the hands of the noble men who went in search of the Golden Fleece for Pelias. For then my mistress Medea would not have sailed to the towers of Iolcos, her heart smitten with love for Jason, nor have persuaded the daughters of Pelias to kill their father and gone to live in this land of Corinth with her husband and children, pleasing by her exile the citizens of the land she came to, and complying with Jason in all respects.'

16 EdM, viii (1820), 520-22; Eum. 1-234.

17 See Chapter 8, pp. 264-73.

18 See NLS MS 790, pp. 82-83, 287, 298-99, 320, 323, 358-59, 362-64, 388, 393, 451.

19 NLS MS 673, ff. 111-12, 117-19.

This piece of translation is prefaced by a 'letter to the editor' signed 'Philotheus', in which Philotheus expresses particular admiration for the opening scenes in Aeschylus and offers his own version of the opening scene in the Eumenides.<sup>20</sup> In style and technique the translation resembles Morehead's Agamemnon and makes his authorship almost certain. The prologue is spoken by the Prophetess, who begins with an invocation of the various deities associated with Apollo at Delphi. The language and sentiments are not difficult, and the translation keeps very close to the original for this part of the speech. But when the Prophetess comes crawling back out of the shrine in terror, the language is heightened and Morehead adapts his translation accordingly; although somewhat freer, it still keeps as close as possible to the original, and succeeds in catching the horror without overwriting:

O spectacle of horror! Can I tell	
What I have seen, chasing me back again	
Forth from the shrine, on tottering feet that scarce	
Support my agitated body, fighting	
Its way more by the motion of my hands	5
Than my weak legs. I, poor old woman, half	
A child, feeble as nothing, crawled along	
Into the inner flower-wreathed chancel,	
Where, in its dark recess, I saw a man	
Sitting, a suppliant of the god — but oh!	10
To gods and men detestable — with hands	
Dropping of blood; in one a new drawn sword,	
While in the other waved an olive bough	
Aloft; his head begirt with snowy wool,	
Token of supplication; (I beheld	15
Him well;) before him a tremendous band	
Of women crowd the seats, all fast asleep.—	
Of women say I? Gorgons rather, yet	
Not quite the gorgon form, if 'tis pourtrayed	
Right in the picture where they stand around	20

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20 EdM, viii (1821), 519. There would be nothing unusual in an editor writing to himself; it was common enough at this time for magazine contributors to conceal their identity in one way or another.



The feast of Phineus; these here have no wings,  
 Black are they all and horrible, with blast  
 Of fury snoring, while from their eyes distils  
 Unsightly gum; dressed in such garb as never  
 Before polluted temple of the gods,  
 No, nor the house of men.<sup>21</sup>

25

The translation is still fairly close except in lines 6-8 (Eum. 38-39), where the difference is due to different punctuation, and in lines 13-14 (Eum. 43-44), where it is the suppliant's head, not the olive-branch, that is decked with wool. The paraphrase of Eum. 34-37 in lines 1-6 is acceptable, bearing in mind the need to represent the panic of the Prophetess and the problems of Aeschylean vocabulary. What else can one do, in particular, with

τρέχω δὲ χερσίν, οὐ ποδωκείᾳ κελῶν

('I run with my hands, not with the swiftfootedness of my legs')  
 in Eum. 37, but write a paraphrase?

The words of the furies as they awake, broken at first, then becoming more coherent, are also close in letter and spirit, although the rhyming in the second stanza comes close to being ludicrous:

Up, up — awake — rouse her as I have you —  
 Are you asleep too? — kick it off — Up, up!  
 The game's afoot, they say — I can't believe it.

Out, out, alas! 'tis true, 'tis true —  
 Our wrongs, my friends, are not a few!  
 Out, out, alas! he's off, he's off —  
 Woe, woe for us, and bitter scoff —  
 The toils are broke, the beast is fled:  
 Our sleep was surely of the dead!

Son of Jove, and was it well  
 O'er us old goddesses thy spell  
 To cast, young mocker? to receive  
 His prayers, the wretch who could bereave  
 His parent of her life? Who says

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21 EdM, viii (1821), 520; Eum. 34-54. For translation, see note 8 above, and compare Smith's much inferior translation of the same passage on p. 283.



Justice and truth are in such ways?<sup>22</sup>

If this really is the work of Morehead, it is a little inferior to his translation of the Agamemnon, but since he was working under pressure, and about to end his stint as editor, the falling-off in quality is easy to explain. At any rate, this was probably his very last essay in translation.

There was one other piece of translation written in 1821, although not published for many years. This was a translation of a choral ode from the Ajax by Winthrop Mackworth Praed (1802-1829).<sup>23</sup> Educated at Eton (where he edited the Etonian) and Trinity College, Cambridge (where he won several Browne medals for poems in Greek),<sup>24</sup> Praed was well-versed in the classics. The majority of his poetry, which was first published in newspapers and periodicals, was light social satire, and this is one of his very few pieces of translation.<sup>25</sup> In Derwent Coleridge's edition of Praed's poems, it is dated 29 November 1821, at which time Praed

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22 EdM, viii (1821), 521; Eum. 140-54: 'Awake! Waken thou her, as I waken thee. Still asleep? Arise, spurn slumber from thee, and let us see whether in this prelude there be aught in vain. Oh, oh! Ugh! Friends, we have suffered. Sooth I have suffered sore indeed and all in vain. We have suffered grievous wrong, alack! an intolerable hurt; our quarry hath slipped from out our toils, and is gone. Overcome by sleep I have lost my prey. Shame! Thou son of Zeus, thou art given to theft, And thou, a youth, hast ridden down aged divinities, By showing respect unto thy suppliant, a godless man and cruel to a parent; god though thou art, thou hast stolen away him that slew his mother. What is there herein that any shall call just?' (Weir Smyth)

23 'Song of the Sailors of Salamis', The Poems of Winthrop Mackworth Praed; with a Memoir by the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, II.349-50; Aj. 596-645.

24 DNB. See also Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature, 1780-1830, II.282-86.

25 See Poems of Praed, II.349-57. Praed translated from Aristophanes, Ovid, Lucretius and Virgil. These translations all seem to have been written while he was at Cambridge.

was still at Cambridge.

The passage translated is the first stasimon, in which the chorus of Salaminian sailors sing of their native island and grieve for the misfortunes of Ajax. It is in the form of two pairs of stanzas in strophic responsion, and Praed has imitated the form as closely as the metrical differences in the two languages permit. Read as an English poem, his version has much of the wistfulness and clarity of the Sophoclean ode, its only weakness being in line 7. It is more of a free paraphrase than a translation, keeping to the main ideas and order of ideas in Sophocles, but rewriting quite extensively. He translates the first strophe as follows:

Fair Salamis, the billow's roar	
Wanders around thee yet;	
And sailors gaze upon thy shore	
Firm in the Ocean set.	
Thy son is in a foreign clime	5
Where Ida feeds her countless flocks,	
Far from thy dear remembered rocks,	
Worn by the waste of time, —	
Comfortless, nameless, hopeless, — save	26
In the dark prospect of the yawning grave.	10

Lines 8-10 are particularly successful in transmitting the spirit of Sophocles, although the price paid for this is the comparative failure of the corresponding lines in the antistrophe. Even so, the whole piece is better regarded as an imitation and not a translation proper.

After this no more translations appeared for some time, although Hartley Coleridge is reported to have written a translation

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26 Poems of Praed, II.349; Aj. 596-608: 'O famous Salamis, thou, I ween, hast thy happy seat among the waves that lash thy shore, the joy of all men's eyes for ever; but I, hapless, have long been tarrying here, still making my couch, through countless months, in the camp on the fields of Ida, — worn by time, and darkly looking for the day when I shall pass to Hades, the abhorred, the unseen.' (Jebb)

(since lost) of the Medea and possibly also the Prometheus in the early 1820s.<sup>27</sup> In 1823 Charles Elton published a series of four articles on Greek tragedy in the London Magazine.<sup>28</sup> Elton (1778-1853) left Eton at the early age of fifteen with an army commission, rising to the rank of captain in the 48th regiment, and eventually becoming lieutenant-colonel of the Somersetshire militia.<sup>29</sup> A man of cultivated tastes, with an interest in the classics stemming from his schooldays, he had leisure time enough to devote to his translations, of which many were published. His translation of Hesiod satisfied the critics in its closeness to the original, although the Monthly Review irritated Elton by complaining about his choice of blank verse rather than rhyme.<sup>30</sup> His Specimens of the Classic Poets, a three-volume anthology published in 1814, was less favourably reviewed, with Henry Hallam in the Quarterly Review the only one prepared to be at all constructive in his criticism.<sup>31</sup> The general complaint was that Elton's translations were too close for him to be able to put any 'spirit' into his work, or to show the differing styles of the original poems. The anthology contained translations from both Greek and Latin, but nothing from Greek tragedy.

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27 E.L. Griggs, Hartley Coleridge: His Life and Work, 94.

28 See Chapter 5, pp. 144-45.

29 DNE; GM, n.s., xl (1853), 88.

30 The Remains of Hesiod the Ascrean, translated by C.A. Elton (London, 1809); reprinted in Valpy's Family Classical Library (1832). It was reviewed in BC, xxxv (1810), 517-18; ER, xv (1809-10), 109-18; and MR, lix (1809), 19-29. Elton replied to the strictures of the MR in the introduction to his Specimens of the Classic Poets, I.viii-xv.

31 See BC, n.s., ii (1814), 490-508; EM, lxvii (1815), 335-37; GM, lxxxv (1815), 52-55; MM, xxxvii (1814), 636-48; MR, lxxviii (1815), 76-86; and QR, xiii (1815), 151-55.

In the 1820s Elton contributed many articles on classical poetry to the London Magazine,<sup>32</sup> usually including translations of the poems concerned. His principles of translation, fully stated in his introduction to Specimens of the Classic Poets, show that he wished to translate as closely as possible while yet retaining the poetic qualities of the original. He agreed with the dicta of Denham and Dryden, but felt they had been too freely interpreted. In particular, he was highly critical of those translators who were so proud of their poetic talents that they made their arduous task easier by imitating rather than translating.<sup>33</sup>

His series on the Greek tragedians began with an introductory article on Greek drama and continued with one article each on Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. In these three articles Elton wrote briefly about the distinguishing features of the tragedian concerned and then illustrated the work of each by means of a long passage of translation from one of their plays. To illustrate the work of Aeschylus Elton chose the central portion of the Agamemnon, beginning with Clytemnestra's speech of welcome to her husband and ending with her self-justification for having murdered him.<sup>34</sup> It is immediately obvious that Elton has not modified his principles of translation, since he rarely deviates from the letter of the original; but his work, although so scrupulously accurate, is a little unimaginative. Compare his with Morehead's translation of Clytemnestra's confrontation with Cassandra:

Clyt     I have no leisure thus before the gates

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32 See Chapter 5, pp. 143-44.

33 Specimens of the Classic Poets, I.vii-xxxiii.

34 LM, viii (1823), 262-72; Ag. 855-1454.



To waste time with her: at my household altar  
 The sheep stand ready for the victim-slaughter  
 That soon shall feed the fire; as due from those  
 Who gain a grace from heaven beyond all hope.  
 If thou wilt take a part, make no delay.  
 If, witless of my words, thou mark'st me not,  
 Speak with thy foreign gesture to my voice.

Cho. The stranger seems to need  
 Some wise interpreter:  
 Her bearing too is wild,  
 As of some beast of prey  
 Caught in the recent snare.

Clyt. She is insane, and looks distraught of mind;  
 Like one just made a captive, who hath left  
 Her native city. She is restive yet,  
 And champs upon the bit, which she will bear  
 When she has foam'd her bloody rage away.  
 I'll waste my breath no more in chiding her.<sup>35</sup>

Again, Morehead's translation of Cassandra's prophecies, which is admittedly not the best of his work, has more poetic spirit than Elton's accurate but lifeless version:

Cass. Look, lo!  
 Keep back the heifer from the bull! wo, wo!  
 She takes him in the snaring vesture's fold,  
 And with her lifted engine smites: behold!  
 He falls within the font: I tell to thee  
 The font's deceit and slaughterous tragedy!

Cho. I boast not to attain the height  
 Of oracles, but liken them to evil.  
 What speech of good from oracles  
 Has ever reach'd the mortal ear?  
 From immemorial time  
 The arts of prophets bear  
 Dread and disaster to the mind.

Cass. Alas! alas! oh wretched, wretched fate!  
 Mine — I deplore my own forlorn estate:  
 Why hast thou led me hither, wretched maid!  
 Why — but that I may be to death betray'd?

Cho. Thou art delirious: brainsick with the God  
 That sets thy senses thus upon the whirl:  
 And from thy own imaginings  
 Utterest the veering strain  
 Ev'n as the tawny nightingale  
 From her sad pity-loving soul  
 With Itys, Itys, sobs away

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35 LM, viii (1823), 266-67; Ag. 1055-68. For Morehead's translation, see Chapter 8, pp. 267-68. For Weir Smyth's prose translation, see Chapter 8, note 117.



Her life, that blossoms but with miseries.<sup>36</sup>

The second play chosen by Elton was the Electra of Sophocles; he translates from the point where Orestes enters carrying the urn that is supposed to contain his ashes up to the closing lines of the play.<sup>37</sup> Elton's style seems more suited to a translation of Sophocles, since it permits the simplicity of the original to shine through, and makes possible a translation of Electra's mourning speech that is markedly better than any of those in Chapter 8:

O dear memorial of the most beloved  
 Of men! thou remnant of Orestes' soul!  
 With hopes how different do I now receive thee  
 From those with which I sent thee forth! for now  
 I grasp thee in my hands, and thou art nothing. 5  
 Yet then, poor youth! I sent thee from our house,  
 Radiant in all thy bloom. Oh! would that life  
 Had left me, ere I sent thee thus away  
 Into a foreign land, when I by stealth  
 Preserved thee safe, and snatched thee from the slaughter!  
 So on that very day thou mightst have fallen,  
 And thus in quiet shared thy father's tomb!  
 Now far from home, and in a stranger land,  
 A banish'd man, and parted from thy sister,  
 Thou hast most foully fallen! Nor with these hands 15  
 Could I, unhappy, deck thy sprinkled corse,  
 Or, as beseem'd me, bear the painful pile  
 For th' all-consuming fire: but thou, poor wretch!  
 Wert laid by foreign hands, and thou art here  
 A heap of dust within a narrow urn. 20  
 Oh me unhappy! unavailing dainties,  
 Which many a time and oft in the days past  
 I brought thee with sweet trouble! thou wert never  
 Dear to thy mother as to me: and I  
 Of all the household people was thy nurse; 25  
 I, thy own sister, still conversed with thee.  
 There is an end of all; for on one day  
 All died with thee: departing, thou hast swept  
 All with thee, like a storm; dead is my father:  
 I too am dead to thee: thou dead and vanish'd. 30  
 My enemies — they laugh: and she, my mother,

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36 LM, viii (1823), 268; Ag. 1125-45. For Morehead's translation see Chapter 8, p. 272. For Jebb's prose translation, see Chapter 8, note 124.

37 LM, viii (1823), 373-80; El. 1098-1504.

Yet not my mother, is at her wits' end  
 With exultation: she, concerning whom  
 Thou oft hast sent me messengers, and said  
 That thou wouldst come in person and with vengeance. 35  
 But thy most ill-starr'd fortune and my own  
 Hath robb'd us of our hope, and brought me back,  
 For thy dear person, ashes and a shade.<sup>38</sup>

The quaintness of such phrases as 'painful pile' (l. 17) for

ζθλιον βάρος (El. 1140: 'sad burden') and 'at her wits' end'

(l. 32) for μείνεται (El. 1153: 'is mad') is something of a

blemish, but Elton's real failure is that the tone and pace remain the same throughout, so that he is unable to match the steady rise of feeling in the Greek towards the end of this passage.

His translation of the long passages of stichomythia show both the strength and weakness of his technique: strength, in that he works hard at retaining close line-for-line translation as far as his metre permits; but weakness, in that the strangeness of the English dialogue is a constant reminder that we are reading a translation:

Or. Ah! for thy hapless, unespoused condition!

El. Why, stranger! dost thou groan and gaze upon me?

Or. How little did I know of my misfortunes!

El. From what, that I have said, discernst thou this?

Or. Seeing thee thus in singular distresses.

El. And yet thou seest not half of what I suffer.

Or. How can I look on worse than what I see?

El. I dwell, perforce, with murderers.

Or. How! with murderers?

El. My father's murderers: forced to be their slave.

Or. Who drives thee on to this necessity?

El. She who is call'd — ah how unlike! — my mother.

Or. Say, by what usage? — blows or sordid fare?

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38 LM, viii (1823), 373-74; El. 1126-59. For translation, see see Chapter 8, notes 22-27.

El. Blows, and ill fare, and every kind of outrage.<sup>39</sup>

In the lyric passages, too, Elton keeps close to the letter of his text, but his verse is heavy and unattractive:

Look you, where he stalks before,  
Mars resistless, gendering gore:  
See the roofs are closing o'er  
Th' unerring dogs of hell,  
Train'd by the furies to explore  
The plots of mischief fell:  
Not long the dream will halt behind,  
That hung o'er my prophetic mind.<sup>40</sup>

There is more life in Elton's translation from the Orestes,<sup>41</sup> partly because Euripides seems to have been Elton's favourite tragedian,<sup>42</sup> and partly because Elton's natural style — the slightly heightened language of every day — is more appropriate for translating the style of Euripides. Thus the stichomythia in Elton's translation is less stilted, because Euripides himself had sought to make his Greek less formal than that of Sophocles:

Helen. One thing, O maiden! I conjure you grant me.

Electra. What leisure have I, nursing my sick brother?

Hel. Indulge my wish, visit my sister's tomb.

39 LM, viii (1823), 375; El. 1183-96: 'Or. Alas for thy life, unwedded and all unblest! El. Why this steadfast gaze, stranger, and these laments? Or. How ignorant was I, then, of mine own sorrows! El. By what that hath been said hast thou perceived this? Or. By seeing thy sufferings, so many and so great. El. And yet thou seest but a few of my woes. Or. Could any be more painful to behold? El. This, that I share the dwelling of the murderers. Or. Whose murderers? Where lies the guilt at which thou hintest? El. My father's; — and then I am their slave perforce. Or. Who is it that subjects thee to this constraint? El. A mother — in name; but no mother in her deeds. Or. How doth she oppress thee? With violence or with hardship? El. With violence, and hardships, and all manner of ill.' (Jebb)

40 LM, viii (1823), 378; El. 1384-90. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 138.

41 LM, viii (1823), 503-08; Or. 71-347.

42 See Elton's introductory remarks to his translation from the Orestes, LM, viii (1823), 503-04.

- El. My mother's, wouldst thou say? and what thy purpose?  
Hel. Take my clipp'd locks and pour my grave-libation.  
El. Shouldst thou not visit thy own sister's grave?  
Hel. I blush to show my person to the Greeks.  
El. Too late discreet, for shameless thy elopement.  
Hel. Thou speak'st of me most truly, but not kindly.  
El. Why should'st thou blush to meet the Myceneans?  
Hel. I dread the fathers of the slain at Troy.<sup>43</sup>

It is again his closeness to Euripides that saves Elton in his translation of more emotional utterance, as in his version of Orestes' speech in which madness gives way to sanity:

- Or. Give me the horn-tipp'd bow, Apollo's gift,  
 To drive the Furies, when they scared me, hence.  
El. Can Gods be wounded by a mortal hand?  
Or. Aye — if they will not vanish from mine eyes.  
 Hear ye not? see ye not how the notch'd arrow 5  
 Twangs on the quivering bowstring ere it fly?  
 Ha! wherefore loiter ye? mount on your wings  
 Into the sky: accuse his oracles.—  
 Ah! wherefore do I faint? why does my breath  
 Gasp in quick pants? how came it that I sprang 10  
 Wide from the couch? — The storm subsides — 'tis calm.  
 Why weep'st thou, sister! nestling thus thy cheek  
 Within my bosom's vesture? I am shamed  
 To make thee share my sufferings, and afflict  
 Thy virgin softness with my malady.<sup>44</sup>

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- 43 LM, viii (1823), 504; Or. 92-102: 'Hel. In the name of the gods, maiden, please do something for me. El. Yes, but I have no leisure; I am looking after my brother. Hel. Will you go to my sister's tomb for me? El. My mother's — are you asking me — for what purpose? Hel. With locks of my hair and libations. El. Is it unlawful for you to approach the tomb of your loved ones? Hel. Yes, for I am ashamed to show myself to the Argives. El. Indeed, you are too late in your prudence; then you left home in a shameful manner. Hel. What you have said is right, but you are not speaking to me as a friend. El. What shame do you feel concerning the Mycenaean? Hel. I fear the fathers of those who died at Troy.'
- 44 LM, viii (1823), 507; Or. 268-82: 'Or. Give me the horn-tipped bow, the gift of Loxias, with which the god told me to drive away the goddesses, if they should frighten me with their mad frenzies. A goddess shall be struck by mortal hand if she does not depart out of my sight. Do you not hear? Do you not see the winged arrows leaping from the far-shooting bow? Aha! Why



He departs twice from the original text, tempted on both occasions to over-dramatise. First, in line 6, he makes Orestes ask Electra if she hears and sees how the arrow 'Twangs on the quivering bow-string', which distorts the Greek ἐκὐβόλων τόξων. . . ἐξορμωμένας (Or. 273-74: 'leaping from the far-shooting bow') for no good reason, although Elton's image is in itself effective enough. Then, in lines 12-13, he either unintentionally mistranslates κρᾶτα θεῖς' εἴω πέπλων (Or. 280: 'covering your head with your robe') or deliberately sentimentalises the original. Since he is usually so accurate, the latter is more likely.

His translation of the lyric passages in Orestes also sounds better than his lyric versions of Agamemnon and Electra, although his customary reliance on the tum-ti-tum rhythm of tetrameter couplets dulls the opening lines of the following passage:

- Cho. See, he moves the covering vest,  
Tossing in his broken rest.
- El. Luckless woman! thou hast spoken  
Rudely, and his rest is broken.
- Cho. I had deem'd his slumber fast:
- El. Will ye not depart at last,  
Treading softly as ye go?
- Cho. Nay — he sleepeth.
- El. Aye — 'tis so.
- Cho. Oh night, oh solemn night,  
That sheddest sleep  
On trouble-wearied eyes;  
From Erebus' still deep

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then do you linger? Skim the upper air with your wings; blame the oracles of Phoebus. Ah! Why does my mind wander, why force the breath from my lungs? Where, oh where have I leapt to from my bed? For after the storm I see calm again. Sister, why do you weep, with your head covered by your robe? I am ashamed of giving you a share of my sufferings, causing trouble to a maiden by my illness.' Elton follows Porson in giving Or. 271 to Electra. I have translated according to the Loeb text.



On downy wing  
 Arise! arise!  
 O'er Agamemnon's house thy shadows fling;  
 To our misfortunes and our griefs a prey  
 We are consumed, consumed away!<sup>45</sup>

Elton's translations are lack-lustre, but one must remember that his purpose, as he made clear in his introductory remarks, was to show what thoughts and characters interested the ancient Greeks, and what the Greek tragedies were actually like as plays. In this he has succeeded, and done the three tragedians considerable service by presenting them, unadorned, to the many readers of this very popular magazine.

In December 1823 a fourth translation from Greek tragedy appeared in the London Magazine, above the signature 'K'.<sup>46</sup> This, the scene from the Medea in which the heroine meditates the murder of her children, is superfluous to the plan of Elton's series, and for that reason is unlikely to be his. In any case, he never used the signature 'K' and had written his series on Greek tragedy as 'Vida'.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, the technique employed by the translator, with its reliance on eighteenth-century poetic diction and preference for free paraphrase with additional material, is quite unlike that of Elton. The following extract contains a particularly bad example of this freedom of treatment:

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45 LM, viii (1823), 505-06; Or. 165-81: 'Cho. See? His body moves under his cloak. El. Yes, you wretch, for your shouting has made him wake up. Cho. Well, I thought I was asleep. El. Won't you leave us, take your feet away again and remove the sound of your voice from the house? Cho. He is asleep. El. So he is. Cho. Queen, lady Night, giver of sleep to hard-toiling mortals, come from Erebus. Come, come on your wings to the house of Agamemnon. For we are being destroyed, utterly destroyed, by anguish and misfortune.'

46 LM, viii (1823), 611-13; Med. 1002-80.

47 Riga and Prance, Index to the London Magazine, 90, discuss the authorship of this article.

O bitter fruit of obstinate self-will!  
 And have then all my cares been vainly lavish'd, —  
 Worn out and feeble with maternal toils,  
 Rack'd with the throes of labour, spent with tendance  
 On wayward infancy, — is this my guerdon?  
 Yet, I had hoped, fond wretch, in their embrace  
 To have found the solace of my wasting years,  
 Those thousand cares, those nameless sympathies,  
 Anticipating speech, and look, and thought,  
 Which in the last weary stage of life beguile,  
 And smooth its passage downward to the grave.<sup>48</sup>

It is possible that this translation was written by H.S. Van Dyk, another contributor to the London Magazine, who regularly signed himself 'K'.<sup>49</sup>

Coming so soon after Elton's translations, the work of Thomas Dale and John Symmons, both published in 1824, might have hoped for a ready audience. In the event, it seems that Dale was more immediately successful with his two-volume translation of the works of Sophocles, which was published in 1824 with the backing of an impressive number of subscribers.<sup>50</sup> At the end of his long introduction, in which he gave a simple account of the conventions of Greek tragedy for the benefit of unclassical readers, he stated the main purpose of his translation: 'to render the diversified metres of the original by measures as nearly corresponding as the genius of our language will permit',<sup>51</sup> and 'to express the sense

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48 LM, viii (1823), 612; Med. 1028-35: 'Wretched am I through my wilfulness; in vain, then, have I reared you, my children, and in vain have I laboured and suffered torment, bearing harsh agonies at your birth. Once, indeed, I — unhappy woman — had many hopes for you, that you would feed me in my old age, and tend me kindly with your hands when I died, a thing desired by mortals.'

49 Riga and Prance, 90, suggest Van Dyk as the author for this reason.

50 A long list of the subscribers is printed in Dale's Sophocles, II.375-86.

51 Dale's Sophocles, I.xxxii.

of the original as closely as the idiom of the English language will allow'.<sup>52</sup> His purpose would naturally require him to make extensive revisions of the few specimens already published, and this is what he has indeed done. A comparison of the extract from the Oedipus Coloneus quoted on page 285 above with the new version in the 1824 edition shows at once that Dale has tightened up his translation and sought a closer equivalent of the Greek metre:

O venerable strangers, though ye shrunk  
 Recoiling from the tale  
 Of my poor aged sire,  
 Speaking of dark involuntary deeds;  
 I do conjure you, turn not thus from me,  
 Me, while in suppliant languish, I implore  
 Compassion for a father, and regard  
 Your steadfast gaze with unaverted eye.  
 Ah! deem me now as one  
 Of your own kindred, and let pity wake  
 To aid the lost. On you, as on the Gods  
 Our hopes depend. Oh! then relent, and grant  
 This unexpected boon.  
 I here adjure you by each hallowed tie,  
 Your child, your wife, your duty, and your God.  
 Where will ye find the man who can escape,  
 When Fate's stern hand constrains him to despair?<sup>53</sup>

He has chosen an unrhymed, irregular metre to represent the dactyls of Sophocles, and the occasional expansions, especially in the last line, are intended to clarify ideas implicit in the original. Apart from the weakness of the last line, this version is reasonably successful.

Dale's first stated purpose is particularly applicable to the lyric passages, where the conscientious translator constantly battles to reconcile some sort of metrical equivalence with accuracy of translation. In contrast to Elton's hasty and

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52 Dale's Sophocles, I.xxxiv.

53 Dale's Sophocles, I.123; OC. 237-53. For translation, see note 12 above.

uninspired lyrics, Dale's versions are in general remarkably successful in coping with the variety of tone and rhythm in the Greek. In a second passage from the Oedipus Coloneus, the ode celebrating the beauties of Colonus, Dale manages to catch the texture and tranquillity of the original:

Well did fate thy wanderings lead,  
 Stranger, to this field of fame,  
 Birth-place of the generous steed,  
 Graced by white Colonus' name.  
 Frequent in the dewy glade  
 Here the nightingale is dwelling;  
 Through embowering ivy's shade,  
 Here her plaintive notes are swelling.<sup>54</sup>

For the whole strophe from which these lines are taken, Dale has used a fourteen-line sonnet rhyme-scheme, thereby reminding his readers of the formal structure of the Greek choral ode.

Elsewhere, Dale varies the rhyme and rhythm within his stanza to bring out similar variations in the Greek strophes, as in this extract from an ode in the Antigone:

What blessedness is theirs, whose earthly date  
 Glides unembittered by the taste of woe!  
 But when a house is struck by angry Fate,  
 Through all its line what ceaseless miseries flow! 5  
 As when from Thrace rude whirlwinds sweep,  
 And in thick darkness wrap the yawning deep,  
 Conflicting surges on the strand  
 Dash the black mass of boiling sand  
 Rolled from the deep abyss; — the rocky shore  
 Struck by the swollen tide, reverberates the roar.<sup>55</sup> 10

His first four lines reproduce the general maxims of Ant. 582-85

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54 Dale's Sophocles, I.147-48; OC. 668-74. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 69.

55 Dale's Sophocles, I.248; Ant. 582-91: 'Blest are they whose days have not tasted of evil. For when a house hath once been shaken from heaven, there the curse fails nevermore, passing from life to life of the race; even as, when the surge is driven over the darkness of the deep by the fierce breath of Thracian sea-winds, it rolls up the black sand from the depths, and there is a sullen roar from wind-vexed headlands that front the blows of the storm.' (Jebb)



by using the sententious 'diction' of the eighteenth century; lines 5-10 then change in rhyme, rhythm and language to translate the simile in Ant. 586-91. The expansion and paraphrasing, particularly in the first four lines, are a small price to pay for the effectiveness overall.

One of his closest lyrical translations is his version of the third stasimon in the Electra, the short ode of suspense as the Chorus awaits the murder of Clytemnestra. He translates the strophe thus:

Behold, where breathing blood  
Of deadly strife Mars speeds his onward way;  
The hounds who mark the guilty for their prey,  
Whom flight can ne'er elude,  
Are entering now the palace; and the cloud  
Of dark suspense, ere long, shall cease my dreams to shroud.<sup>56</sup>

On this occasion sense, rhythm and atmosphere all combine in a stanza which it would be difficult to improve.

At times, though, in his attempt to maintain equivalence of tone and some sort of metrical resemblance, he is drawn away from the words and ideas in Sophocles, so that a stanza which sounds right as a piece of English poetry is found on closer examination to be unsatisfactory as a translation. For example:

Bright the prophetic word hath shone  
From hoar Parnassus' snow-crowned brow,  
To trace the guilty wretch, unknown,  
And hid in darkness now.  
Aye let him range the lonely wood, 5  
Lurk, like the bull, in cavern rude,  
Or with tired steps a weary wanderer roam —  
Ne'er can he shun the presage of his doom  
From Delphi's shrine denounced, — where'er he fly,

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56 Dale's Sophocles, II.364; El. 1384-90. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 138.



The living Curse is nigh.<sup>57</sup>

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The metre has forced him to add some words — 'prophetic' (l. 1), 'hoar' and 'brow' (l. 2), and 'rude' (l. 6) — as well as one whole line (l. 4). These may be considered as enforced additions, but it is less acceptable to paraphrase μέλειος μελέω ποδὶ χηρεύων (OT. 479: 'wretched and solitary on his wretched path') as 'with tired steps a weary wanderer roam' (l. 7); or to turn the oracular foreboding of the Greek into such a positive statement in English by writing 'let him range. . . ne'er can he shun' (ll. 5-8). On the other hand, his first word, 'Bright' (l. 1), is placed in the same key position as ἔλαμψε (OT. 473: 'shone'), and his last sentence, 'where'er he fly, The Living Curse is nigh' (ll. 9-10), carries the same tone and idea as τὰ δ' αἰὲν ζῶντα περιποτᾶται (OT. 481-82: 'But the prophecies always live and flutter round him') and also approximates closely to the metrical and syntactical arrangement of the Greek.

The reason for this variation in quality is not Dale's inadequacy as a poet, but rather the tremendous difficulty of translating a poem in a complex metrical scheme into some sort of English equivalent, a difficulty made worse by the need to match strophe with antistrophe. Obviously, a short stanza, such as that in the example taken above from the Electra, is easier to handle. When a longer stanza is involved, perfection is impossible, and Dale deserves congratulation not only for rejecting the easy path

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57 Dale's Sophocles, I.40-41; OT. 473-82: 'Yea, newly given from snowy Parnassus, the message hath flashed forth to make all search for the unknown man. Into the wild wood's covert, among caves and rocks he is roaming, fierce as a bull, wretched and forlorn on his joyless path, still seeking to put from him the doom spoken at Earth's central shrine; but that doom ever lives, ever flits around him.' (Jebb)

of free paraphrase and imitation, but for coming so close to the entirety of the ode in question. It is worth comparing his translation of the first stasimon in the Ajax with the version done by Praed. Praed had got the style and tone right at the expense of accurate translation. Dale's version is closer, although he sometimes has to find refuge in free paraphrase, but he has achieved closeness to the words and ideas of Sophocles only by sacrificing any approximation to style and tone:

Famed Salamis, — thy happy shores arise,  
 Sublime 'mid ocean, where the wild waves war;  
 Thy towering cliffs the distant sail descries;  
 While I, unhappy! lingering yet afar  
 On Ida's pastured plain  
 Through long, long years remain,  
 Unhonoured, and by withering age opprest;  
 Torn with desponding fear,  
 Lest darker fate severe  
 Dismiss my shuddering soul to Death's drear shades unblest.<sup>58</sup>

Turning from the lyric passages to the speeches and dialogues, we find that here too Dale has done extremely well in keeping to his purpose of translating as closely as English idiom will permit. In translating those passages of dialogue where a strict pattern such as stichomythia is followed, Dale does not seek to translate one line by one line, and so on, realising that this would often produce unidiomatic English. Instead, he finds a simple and sensible solution by adopting a pattern of his own, which may be shorter or longer than the original, depending on how best he can translate it. Compare his version of El. 1183-96 with Elton's version of the same passage:

Or.     Alas, thy life, unwedded and unblest!

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58 Dale's Sophocles, II.124; Aj. 596-608. For Praed's translation, see p. 291 above. For Jebb's prose translation, see note 26 above.

- El. Why, stranger, shouldst thou look upon my state  
With grief like this?
- Or. Nought knew I till this hour  
Of all my wretchedness.
- El. How learn'st thou this  
From aught that I have uttered?
- Or. I behold thee  
Conspicuous for thy sorrows.
- El. Of my ills  
The part that meets thine eye is small indeed!
- Or. What can be heavier than I now behold?
- El. I am an inmate with the murderers —
- Or. Of whom — what evils dost thou here imply?
- El. My Father's murderers — nor is this all —  
I am perforce their slave!
- Or. Who of mankind  
To such a lot constrains thee?
- El. She is called  
My mother — but with that endearing name  
No kindred claims!
- Or. How doth she wrong thee thus?  
By violence or penury?
- El. By all —  
By force — and penury — and all other ills.<sup>59</sup>

There are times, in his translation of the more impassioned speeches, when Dale yields to the temptation to add more 'feeling' than is justified, although he is free from the worst excesses of some other translators. For example, in his version of the request of Oedipus, now blind, that Creon be kind to his two daughters, Dale begins and ends with a close and successful translation, but indulges himself in a sentimental paraphrase of the central lines:

As for my children — for my sons, O Creon,  
Take no solicitude — for they are men —  
Where'er they roam, they cannot feel the pangs  
Of piercing penury. — But, O! my daughters! —

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<sup>59</sup> Dale's Sophocles, II.352-53; El. 1183-96. For Elton's translation, see pp. 296-97 above. For Jebb's prose translation, see note 39 above.

My much loved daughters! — in the weak estate 5  
 Of virgin helplessness — who never dwelt  
 Apart from their loved father, and with whom  
 I ever shared my pomp — my joy — my all, —  
 Be these thy constant care, and grant me now  
 To clasp them, and bewail our common woes. 10  
 Assent, O King! —  
 O generous Monarch, while my hand may touch them,  
 I seem to hold, as though I saw them still.  
 What do I say? —  
 Ye gods! my much loved children do I hear, 15  
 Wailing our woes? — hath pitying Creon sent  
 The dearest pledges of my love to bless me?  
 Are my words true?<sup>60</sup>

For Dale, penury is 'piercing' (l. 4) and care is 'constant'

(l. 9), and the pathetic cry of 'O! my daughters!' (l. 4) must be amplified by 'My much loved daughters!' (l. 5). He tries to tug even harder at the heartstrings with his free paraphrase of OT.

1464-65:

ἀλλ' ὅσων ἐγὼ  
 ψάύοιμι, πάντων τῶνδ' ἀεὶ μετειχέτην

('but they both always shared all those things I laid my hand on')

as:

and with whom  
 I ever shared my pomp — my joy — my all (ll. 7-8).

But in criticising Dale for being over-sentimental, one must accept that such writing was both typical of and acceptable to his contemporaries. Set against this is his success in the opening

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60 Dale's Sophocles, I.96-97; OT. 1459-75; 'But as touching my children — I pray thee, Creon, take no care on thee for my sons; they are men, so that, be they where they may, they can never lack the means to live. But my two girls, poor hapless ones, — who never knew my table spread apart, or lacked their father's presence, but ever in all things shared my daily bread, — I pray thee, care for them; and — if thou canst — suffer me to touch them with my hands, and to indulge my grief. Grant it, prince, grant it, thou noble heart! Ah, could I but once touch them with my hands, I should think that they were with me, even as when I had sight. Ha? O ye gods, can it be my loved ones that I hear sobbing, — can Creon have taken pity on me and sent me my children — my darlings? Am I right?' (Jebb)



and closing lines in keeping so close to both syntax, length of phrase and ideas of his original.

Compared with this, his translation of Philoctetes' plea to Neoptolemus is more successful:

Thou blasting flame! Thou horror of my soul!  
 Thou loathed inventor of atrocious fraud;  
 What hast thou done — how wronged my easy faith?  
 Doth it not shame thee to behold me thus,  
 A suitor and a suppliant, wretch, to thee? 5  
 Stealing my bow, of life thou hast bereft me.  
 Restore, I pray thee, O my son, restore it!  
 By thine ancestral Gods, take not my life!  
 Wretch that I am! he deigns not e'en reply,  
 But still looks backward, as resolved to spurn me. 10  
 Ye ports, ye beetling crags, ye haunts obscure  
 Of mountain-beasts, ye wild and broken rocks,  
 To you I mourn, for I have none beside!  
 To you, who oft have heard me, tell the wrongs,  
 The cruel deeds Achilles' son hath wrought! 15  
 Pledged to convey me home, he sails to Troy —  
 Plighting his hand in faith — he meanly steals  
 My bow, the sacred arms of Jove's great son;  
 And would display them to the Grecian host.<sup>61</sup>

The few added words, such as 'blasting' (l. 1), 'beetling' (l. 11) and 'cruel deeds' (l. 15), probably added to fill out their respective lines, are more acceptable because they do not distort the meaning or tone of the original.

But the chief touchstone of Dale's talent as a translator must be his version of that much-translated speech from the Electra:

Memorial dear of all I loved on earth,  
 The sole sad relic of Orestes now,  
 Ah with what different hopes I sent thee forth,  
 And with what grief receive thee! In my hands  
 I bear thee — nothing now — yet from these halls, 5  
 I sent thee forth, dear boy! in youth's fair bloom.  
 O had I earlier died, ere with these hands  
 I stole and sent thee to a foreign land,  
 And saved thy life from murderer's lifted sword —  
 Thou on that day hadst lain a peaceful corpse, 10  
 And shared at last thy father's common tomb.  
 Now, far from home, and in a stranger-land,

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61 Dale's Sophocles, II.240-42; Phil. 927-44. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 90.



Far from thy sister exiled hast thou died,  
 Nor my fond hands love's latest task performed,  
 Nor bathed thy corpse — nor from the flaming pyre 15  
 Bore thy sad relics, as beseemed me best;  
 Unhappy, deck'd by stranger-hands thou com'st,  
 A scanty freight, and in a narrow urn!  
 Alas! how vain are all mine earlier cares,  
 How vain the welcome labours, which for thee 20  
 I oft endured; for to thy mother's heart  
 Thou couldst not have been dearer than to mine.  
 Of all within I only was thy nurse,  
 And thou didst greet me with a sister's name —  
 But now these joys in one sad day are fled — 25  
 With thee retiring: all are swept away  
 Swift as the rushing of the winged blast.  
 My father is departed — I am lost —  
 And thou art with the dead — yet laugh our foes —  
 And our vile mother, from a mother's name 30  
 Estranged, is raving with unbridled joy —  
 Of whom in secret tidings didst thou pledge  
 Thyself the doomed Avenger, soon to come.  
 Now thy stern fate, and mine, hath torn away  
 That hope for evermore, which brings me here 35  
 When I had thought to clasp thy form beloved,  
 But lifeless ashes and an empty shade.<sup>62</sup>

As with the other passages cited, Dale manages fairly well to resist the temptation to overwrite. Most of the extra words have been added simply to fill out a line, and do not distort the sense: for example, 'dear' (l. 1), 'sole sad' (l. 2), 'joys' and 'sad' (l. 25) and 'lifeless' (l. 37). On the other hand, he could have found a more successful word than 'peaceful' to add in line 10, and 'soon to come' (l. 33) is a weak phrase to add in a place of such importance, just before the climactic lines. Some of the translations and paraphrases are a little weak. 'Scanty freight' (l. 18) is a rather strained, old-fashioned translation of *σμικρὸς . . . ὄγκος* (El. 1142: 'a little heap'); while 'retiring' (l. 26) replaces the bald statement in *θανόντι* (El. 1150: 'dying') with a feeble euphemism. His translation of El. 1138-39,

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62 Dale's Sophocles, II.349-51; El. 1126-59. For translation, see Chapter 8, notes 22-27.

Nor my fond hands love's latest task performed (l. 14), is weak and sentimental. Also, by paraphrasing and lengthening *μαίνεται δ' ὑφ' ἡδονῆς μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ* (El. 1153-54: 'My mother, no mother, is mad with joy'), which admittedly contains a virtually untranslatable phrase, his version (ll. 30-31) loses most of its effect, and the added words 'vile' and 'unbridled' do nothing to compensate for the dilution.

But there is much to say on the credit side. He is the first translator to handle with any success the closely placed contrast of *ἔξέπεμπον εἰσεδεξάμεν* (El. 1128: 'I sent you forth, received you back'), which he does in lines 3-4. His phrase 'in youth's fair bloom' (l. 6), a good equivalent of *λαμπρόν* (El. 1130: 'bright'), gains strength by its position in the line. Lines 19-24, which translate El. 1143-48, give the best version so far of this part of the speech. Finally, the climactic lines, which must succeed if the whole speech is to succeed, are again better than any of the other translations, in spite of two additions — 'hope for evermore' (l. 35) and 'lifeless' (l. 37) — and a paraphrase in line 36. The additions and paraphrase work towards the contrast of hope and disappointment in the speech which probably could not be expressed in any other way. One of the most difficult tasks for the translator of Sophocles is to decide how far he may allow himself to make explicit what is understood in the Greek. Dale does not always succeed, but — thanks to the deep understanding of the style of Sophocles which his long labour of translation has given him — his successes generally outweigh his failures.

Dale's translation of Sophocles was warmly received by the critics, and apparently made the translator's reputation for

him.<sup>63</sup> The Eclectic, Monthly and Quarterly Reviews, which all included an article on Dale's translations, were unanimous in their judgement that although Dale sometimes failed to rise to the greater heights of Sophocles, his translation succeeded more than either Francklin or Potter in uniting fidelity with poetic spirit.<sup>64</sup> It is difficult to be sure how successful Dale's translation was with the reading public, for it was never reprinted. Valpy's choice of Francklin's translation for reprinting in the Family Classical Library may be to blame for the undeserved eclipse of Dale's better translation. However, it was probably as a direct result of his translation of Sophocles that Dale was appointed Professor of English Language and Literature at the new University of London in 1828-1830, and later at King's College in 1836-1839.<sup>65</sup>

The other translation published in 1824 was Symmons's translation of the Agamemnon. John Symmons (1781-?1830) was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1803 and M.A. in 1806. At Oxford he was a friend of Henry Fynes Clinton, who later wrote of his indebtedness to Symmons's brilliant mind and critical judgement.<sup>66</sup> After leaving Oxford Symmons entered the legal profession, and also assisted his father in the latter's translation of the Aeneid, which was published in 1817. The end of Symmons's life is obscure. According to the DNB, he 'probably died at Deal in 1842', but in the Gentleman's Magazine for August 1832 he is spoken of as

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63 DNB: the translations 'brought him into general notice'.

64 See Appendix 4.

65 DNB.

66 Clinton, 10-11.

recently dead.<sup>67</sup> Clinton believed him to have 'died in the summer of 1830, at Paris, in much distress'.<sup>68</sup>

In producing this first published translation of the Agamemnon since Potter's Aeschylus in 1777, Symmons was well aware of the problems requiring resolution. Potter, who had used Pauw's text, and seems to have been a capable but not outstanding scholar, had frequently translated incorrectly or used dubious readings, so that although his translation of Aeschylus was generally judged to be 'spirited' enough, it was not accurate.<sup>69</sup> The work of such later editors as Butler and Blomfield made a fresh approach possible, and Symmons himself was well endowed with the necessary scholarship. In his introduction he writes at some length about the particular problems of translating from classical Greek, especially when handling idioms, metaphors and figurative speech in general. The main claim that Symmons wishes to make for his translation is that it is more accurate than Potter's, and he apologises for the fact that although he 'has striven to be as literal as possible', he has nonetheless 'often fallen into languor and diffuseness'.<sup>70</sup> These remarks are encouraging, for they suggest that Symmons wishes to let Aeschylus speak in his own words as far as is possible. The numerous footnotes added to the

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67 GM, cii<sup>2</sup> (1832), 142.

68 Clinton, 11n.

69 See Veilleux, 77-80, for the first reception of Potter's Aeschylus. It was only after the work of early nineteenth-century editors of Aeschylus that the inaccuracies became obvious. Symmons draws attention to many of them in his footnotes.

70 Symmons, xvii-xviii.



translation show from their contents that Symmons has a good understanding of the difficulties of Aeschylus, an appreciation of his poetic qualities and a preference for a more conservative text than was fashionable at this time. Perhaps it is uncharitable to wonder what sort of translation it is that cannot be set before the public without much learned adornment at the foot of nearly every page.

Unfortunately, the translation itself does not fulfil this early promise. The main failing is that Symmons, in his anxiety to reproduce the brilliance of Aeschylean style, has often been drawn into imitation rather than translation; and in his anxiety to ensure that his readers understand the often far-fetched imagery of his original text, has been too ready to insert explanations into his translation. The shortcomings of Symmons are obvious even in the opening lines of the play:

For ever thus? O keep me not, ye Gods,  
 For ever thus, fix'd in the lonely tower  
 Of Atreus' palace, from whose height I gaze  
 O'erwatch'd and weary, like a night-dog still  
 Fix'd to my post: meanwhile the rolling year  
 Moves on, and I my wakeful vigils keep  
 By the cold star-light sheen of spangled skies.  
 The pole is studded o'er; above the rest  
 Flame the bright rulers of the midnight hour;  
 Who shed an influence on us mortal men,  
 And change our seasons as they roll along.  
 Now my eyes watch to see th' appointed signal,  
 The fire in the horizon, whose red dawn  
 Will spread the downfall of proud Ilion's towers  
 Swifter than noisy fame or rumouring tongues:  
 For so I do interpret the command,  
 And read her thoughts who gave it, haughty soul,  
 Our queen, a man in counsel.<sup>71</sup>

This has plenty of life, and reads well, and even follows the main ideas of the original speech, but it is a very free paraphrase

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71 Symmons, 3-4; Ag. 1-11. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 113.



indeed.

However, Symmons can translate closely when he puts his mind to it:

Or shall I tell our wint'rings, and the cold  
 We scarce could bear, engender'd by the snows  
 That hid mount Ida, when the rage of winter  
 Swept from the landskip e'en the birds of air?  
 Or how we broil'd in summer's sultry calms, 5  
 When, on his mid-day couch, the unruffled sea  
 Slept in the stillness of the noontide air,  
 Without a breeze or sigh of zephyr heard.  
 'Tis over; 'tis ended — why lament it now?  
 Now all the labours of the war are past, 10  
 Are past to us; ay, and past too to them,  
 Our comrades dead; to them all feeling's past,  
 Or thoughts of rising from their lowly beds.  
 Why talk of them, poor souls? why tell how many  
 Perish'd, alas! and overcloud the joy 15  
 Of those whose life is left? Down, down, sad thoughts!  
 'Tis time to part from grief, and welcome joy.  
 We that are left of that great Argive host  
 Can say our losses in the scale are light  
 Weigh'd 'gainst our gains.<sup>72</sup> 20

The first four lines are a fairly free paraphrase of Ag. 563-64, but these are followed by five more closely translated lines (ll. 5-9 = Ag. 565-67), which deal very well with the complex metaphor of the sleeping sea at noon, although there is no very good reason why θάλπος (Ag. 565: 'heat') should be expanded into a whole line (l. 5). The weighing-balance image in the last lines is also well translated (ll. 18-20 = Ag. 573-74). But, having shown his competence when dealing with metaphoric language, Symmons expands what is simply expressed in Ag. 568-72 into a quite needlessly explicit version in lines 10-17.

Even when he adheres fairly closely to the original, his odd choice of language can reduce his efforts to the ridiculous, as in his version of this speech of Clytemnestra:

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72 Symmons, 52-53; Ag. 563-74. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 114.

Go in — go in! Cassandra! thee I mean,  
 Enter thou too! since in this mansion Jove  
 Has placed thee nothing wrathfully, to share  
 With many a slave the lavers, as thou stand'st  
 By th' altar of our fortune-giving God. 5  
 Come forth from out that wain: neither be thou  
 O'erweening, too high-stomach'd for thy lot;  
 Such was the lot of great Alcmena's son,  
 For so they tell us, once upon a time,  
 Patient enduring to be sold a slave.<sup>73</sup> 10

Words like 'lavers' (l. 4), 'wain' (l. 6) and 'high-stomach'd' (l. 7) are probably intended to imitate Aeschylus' style. But Symmons is not consistent in this, for at other times he tries to explain obscurities and strange phrases, either in his long footnotes or by incorporating explicit amplifications into the text, or even by both means at once, as in his version of the stanza containing the pun on Helen's name:

When was it, and who gave that truest name  
 (Was it some mysterious one unseen,  
     Provident of coming fate?)  
 To Helen, brand of war, and fierce Contention's bride?  
 Helen she rightly was, and eke 5  
 Helandros and Heleptolis,  
 When she, the fair fatality  
 Of ships, of warriors, and of rampired towns,  
 From her curtain'd chamber fled,  
 And her golden bridal bed, 10  
 Where, all hid, the beauteous queen  
 Lay in damask'd bowers unseen;  
 And spread her flying sails,  
 Fann'd by Zephyr's buxom gales.<sup>74</sup>

Surely one explanation would have been enough, if he was unwilling to translate one pun by another. Furthermore, he feels it necessary to explain the imagery of ἐκ τῶν εἰβροτίμων προκαλυμμάτων (Ag. 690-91: 'from the delicate and costly curtains of her bedroom') by working up this short phrase into four lines of paraphrase (ll.

73 Symmons, 96; Ag. 1035-41. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 116.

74 Symmons, 63-64; Ag. 681-92. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 121.

10-13).

Symmons's amalgam of success and failure is inescapable in his version of Cassandra's prophecies and the answers of the Chorus:

- Cass. Ha! Ha! see there! see there!  
 Keep the bull from the heifer, drive, drive her away!  
 The bull is enchafed and hoodwink'd, and roars;  
 His black branching horns have received the death stab!  
 He sprawls and falls headlong! he lies in the bath, 5  
 Beside the great smouldering caldron that burns!  
 The caldron burns, — it has a deadly blue!
- Cho. No deep skill boast I in the spell of Gods;  
 But yet methinks all that she says bears in't  
 The cast of look as of some evil thing. 10  
 But when did a good or a comforting voice  
 E'er come from the spell of the Gods unto men?  
 In woe deals the craft of the long-worded lays,  
 And brings terror to light in the oracle song.
- Cass. Alas! alas! ah, wretch! ah, luckless fate! 15  
 Myself, myself I moan!  
 Wretch that I am! why hast thou brought me here,  
 Unless to lie beside him in his death?  
 Is't not? what else? what other can it be?
- Cho. O sure thou art one of a deep-raging soul, 20  
 Driven mad by a God, crying out  
 All for thyself tunes of the sad woeful lay,  
 Like her of dark hue, who ne'er has enough  
 Of her cry, in the sadness of her vexed heart,  
 The nightingale dark, Ityn, Ityn, who moans  
 All her life in the shade, deep embowered in woes. 75 25

Symmons has offered no footnote to explain the strangeness of his translation of Cassandra's first speech, especially in lines 5-7 with their smouldering blue cauldron. Presumably this is his idea of oracular utterance. The translation of the reply of the Chorus (ll. 8-14) is more obscure than the Greek, and line 10 is an inexcusably bad expansion of *κακῶ τῷ* (*Ag.* 1131: 'some evil'). But then Symmons crowns this botched effort with a close, yet vivid and effective translation of the comparison the Chorus makes between Cassandra and the nightingale (ll. 20-26).

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75 Symmons, 104-06; *Ag.* 1125-45. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 124.

The imperfections of Symmons's translation were noted by the reviewers. They all agreed that he was more accurate than Potter, but was not a good enough poet to enliven his translation without also falling into stylistic errors.<sup>76</sup> The translation seems not to have been an overnight success. It was only after Symmons's obscure death that it was honoured in Blackwood's Magazine by John Wilson, who described it as 'a noble paraphrase in the spirit of the original'. Wilson also compared Symmons's translation at some length with the translation of Potter, recently reissued by Murray in Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets, and concluded that Symmons was the better scholar and poet.<sup>77</sup> In 1832 the Athenaeum referred to Symmons's translation as 'one of the best classical translations in our language',<sup>78</sup> and R.A. Willmott in the New Monthly Magazine used Symmons's translation to illustrate his article on the Agamemnon.<sup>79</sup> Later, the writer of the popularizing articles on Greek tragedy in the Penny Magazine recommended Symmons's translation as 'inferior to none'.<sup>80</sup> Despite this belated praise, the translation was never reprinted.

In 1826 a blank verse translation of Electra's speech over the urn in the Sophoclean play was included by H.S. Boyd in a miscellaneous collection of his poems.<sup>81</sup> This time, Boyd adhered

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76 CJ, xxxi (1825), 101-12; EcR, n.s., xxiii (1825), 31-54; MR, cvi (1825), 113-32.

77 Bl, xxx (1831), 350-90; see especially p. 364.

78 Ath, v (1832), 334.

79 NMM, xxxv (1832), 211-27.

80 PM, viii (1839), 196.

81 H.S. Boyd, Thoughts on an Illustrious Exile, occasioned by the Persecution of the Protestants in 1815, with Other Poems (1825), 41-42. A review of the book, including the entire translation from the Electra was printed in GM, xcvi (1826), 156.



more closely to his principle of literal translation. Unfortunately his version serves only to illustrate the old truth that literal translations are caput mortuum, since its dull, end-stopped blank verse completely fails to catch the rise and fall of Electra's emotion as she mourns over her brother's ashes, and Boyd has not managed to inject any poetic feeling into his work:

Alas! alas! the ineffectual care,  
 With which in happier times I reared thy youth.  
 O toil to me most sweet! assuredly 20  
 Thy mother loved thee not as I have loved thee;  
 No servant tended thee as I have tended.  
 Yes, I was called the sister of Orestes.  
 Lo! in one day my blooming hopes are blasted,  
 Dying with thee; for, sweeping all away, 25  
 Like the impetuous whirlwind, thou art gone!  
 Gone is my father; I have died with thee.  
 My foes exult, and my — oh! not my mother;  
 She maddens in her joys; concerning whom  
 Thou oft didst send me intimation sweet, 30  
 That thou one day wouldst burst upon my view,  
 And shine the great avenger! But that hope,  
 The unpropitious daemon, thine and mine,  
 Hath scattered on the gale; to me transmitting,  
 Ah! sad exchange for thy beloved form, 35  
 A heap of ashes and an empty shade.<sup>82</sup>

This key passage begins and ends with an expression of the futility Electra feels, in the finely placed words ἀνωφελήτου (El. 1144) and ἀνωφελῇ (El. 1159). Boyd has missed this point, and translated the first word by 'ineffectual' (l. 18) and the second as 'empty' (l. 36). He has perceived the dramatic significance of the passage, though, and has risen to the heights of mediocrity in his response. The word φαινόμενος (El. 1155: 'appearing') persuades him to expand into 'burst upon my view, And shine. . .' (ll. 31-32). After keeping literally to ὁ δυστυχὲς δαίμων ὁ εὖς τε καὶ ὁ καὶ (El. 1156-57: 'your unlucky fortune and

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82 El. 1143-59. For translation, see Chapter 8 notes 25-27.



mine'), he unhappily invents 'Hath scattered on the gale' in place of ἐξαφείλετο (El. 1157: 'has snatched away') in his translation at lines 33-34. The juxtaposition of hope and disappointment in El. 1158-59 is expanded and distorted by Boyd in lines 35-36 so as to lose all effect.

In 1827 and 1828 two passages translated from Greek tragedy appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine. In June 1827 a translation of a choral ode from the Oedipus Tyrannus was published as the first of three articles entitled 'Beauties of the Ancient Poets'.<sup>83</sup> The ode in question is the first stasimon, in which the Chorus refuses to believe that Oedipus can be the murderer referred to by the Delphic Oracle. The anonymous translator has chosen to translate into tetrameter lines rhyming alternately, and his version has the note of false grandeur common in the mediocre magazine poetry of this period. But apart from its monotonous metre and rather spurious tone, and a reliance on hackneyed diction, the translation is creditable enough. There is some free paraphrase, especially in the first stanza, but this translator does not think it his duty to reinterpret and rewrite Sophocles. He translates the first antistrophe as follows:

From Parnassus' crest of snow	
Peal'd the fatal voice on high,	
Trace him through the realms below,	
Who from day and man would fly.	
Speeds he through the tangled groves,	5
Hides he in the caves unknown,	
Like the wandering bull he roves,	
Wretched, fugitive, alone.	
What, though flies he from the sound,	
Thundering from earth's central bed,	10
Still the voice of Fate around	
Hovers deathless o'er his head.	84

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83 GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1827), 499-500; OT. 463-511.

84 GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1827), 499; OT. 473-82. For translation, see note 57 above.

Although less representative of Sophocles in style and tone than Dale's translation, this version is occasionally more successful, as in 'wretched, fugitive, alone' (l. 8) for μέλεος μελέω ποδὶ χηρεύων (OT. 479: 'wretched and solitary on his wretched path'), and 'earth's central bed' (l. 10) for τὰ μεσόμφαλα γᾶς. . . μαντεῖα (OT. 480-81: 'the prophecies from the navel-stone of the earth').

The second translation in the Gentleman's Magazine appeared in the June 1828 supplement, entitled 'Extracts from an Unpublished Tragedy, called "Orestes"', and above the signature 'J.D., Oxon'.<sup>85</sup> The title suggests that J.D. had written more of his translation than appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine, and he may perhaps have hoped to arouse enough interest to venture publishing the whole. But this is mere speculation, since no such publication ensued. In his prefatory remarks, J.D. states that he is paraphrasing, not translating, 'in order to give the general reader a faint idea of the original'. The passage paraphrased, Or. 211-315, is the dialogue between Orestes and Electra after the former wakes from the sleep in which he is discovered at the beginning of the play. However, a close examination shows that there is as much sheer invention as paraphrase, making the most of the sentimental pathos that can be extracted from a scene in which a half-mad brother is lovingly tended by his sister. The speech given to Revenge at the end of the scene has more to do with Seneca or his Elizabethan and Jacobean imitators than with Greek tragedy. A few lines of the more closely paraphrased dialogue will give some idea of the whole:

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85 GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup>(1828), 598-99; Or. 211-315.

- Or. Avert your loathsome grasp, terrific fates;  
God of the silver bow, aid thou my cause!
- El. Still will I cling, nor loose my tottering hand,  
Lest to the earth exhausted thou should'st fall.
- Or. Hold! of my furies thou wh'rt one, unhand me —  
To Hades dark abyss who'd plunge my soul?
- El. Thine hand alone, O Phoebus, can restore him;  
Whom of the Gods, save thee, can I invoke?<sup>86</sup>

In 1829 two full-length translations were published, both of plays by Aeschylus. The lesser of these, yet another translation of the Agamemnon, was included in an unusual trilingual edition of the play by James Kennedy. James Kennedy (1793-1864) devoted his life to classical scholarship. A graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, he held a fellowship there from 1817 until 1830, when he was awarded the college living of Ardtea, County Tyrone, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was apparently an excellent scholar, although vain and pompous in manner, and published a number of classical works, including editions of Demosthenes and Homer.<sup>87</sup> His edition of the Agamemnon contained a Greek text based on that of Blomfield, and the German translation of Voss, as well as Kennedy's own English verse translation.

The preface, which confirms Kennedy's reputation for pomposity, claims that the translation 'has been rendered as literal as was consistent with the idiom of the one language, and

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86 GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1828), 598; Or. 260-67: 'Or. O Phoebus! They will kill me, the dog-faced, fierce-eyed priestesses of the dead, the dread goddesses. El. I will not let you go. But I will fold you in my arms and keep you from making a leap of evil fortune. Or. Let me go. You are one of my Erinyes, and grip my waist so as to throw me into Tartarus. El. Unfortunate am I! What help can I get, since we have a god as our enemy.'

87 DNB.

as diffuse as was compatible with the spirit of the other'.<sup>88</sup>

Kennedy's principles are laudable, and if applied by the right person, should produce a worthwhile translation. That Kennedy was not the right person is very soon obvious, for although he has scholarship, he has no ear for poetry. His prologue begins:

I pray the Gods a respite from these toils,  
 This year-protracted watch, through which reclined  
 Aloft here on the roof of the Atridae,  
 Like house-dog, I have held communion with  
 Th' assemblage of those stars, night-gems, and those 5  
 Bright rulers, — change to mortals heralding  
 Of summer-tide and winter, orbs diffusing  
 Their radiance through the expanse, — setting now,  
 Now orient. And the torch's signal-light,  
 Of flame bright glancing, tidings from far Troy 10  
 Bearing, and of its downfal sure announcement,  
 I watch for now — so dominant, I ween,  
 Is woman's spirit, nerv'd to manly purpose.<sup>89</sup>

This is accurate enough, but dull, and such phrases as 'like house-dog' (l. 4) and 'setting now, Now orient' (ll. 8-9) are in questionable taste. But on other occasions, the natural pomposity and prosiness of the translator are inescapable:

Leisure have I none at command to waste  
 In thus attending here outside the gate;  
 For now some time have the mid-altar's victims  
 Stood at the hearth, i' th' fire to be consum'd,  
 We ne'er expecting favour such as this.  
 But thou, if ought you purpose of my bidding  
 To do, make no delay; or should my speech  
 Be, through your ignorance, not comprehended  
 Sign with barbarian hand in lieu of utt'rance.<sup>90</sup>

Kennedy's apparent belief that sliced-up prose automatically becomes good blank verse is a warning of what one may expect from his translation of the lyric passages, especially in view of his statement in the preface that he proposes to dispense with rhyme

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88 Kennedy, vii.

89 Kennedy, 23-24; Ag. 1-11. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 113.

90 Kennedy, 136-37; Ag. 1055-61. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 117.



in his translation of the choral odes in order to preserve more accurately the 'flow' of the original.<sup>91</sup> There is nothing in itself wrong with such a proposal, since an unrhymed translation, in the right hands, could be effective. Symmons, for example, had sometimes dispensed with rhyme with some measure of success.<sup>92</sup> But in Kennedy's hands, the 'flow' becomes very irregular:

We meanwhile, an unhonor'd band,  
 With flesh by age's withering touch  
     Blasted, that martial train  
 Deem'd unfit to join, remain,  
 A strength but that of childhood staying  
     With the staff's support.  
 For the spirit of infancy bounding within  
 The breast is but that of decrepitude's years,  
     Nor is Ares station'd there;  
 So with old age — when the verdure of life  
     Is wither'd and sear.  
 His tottering limbs the staff upholding,  
 Than babe not stronger, hobbling forth,  
     A vision in day-light, 93  
     The dotard roams.

This is one of Kennedy's better efforts: at least one is not disposed to laugh. The same cannot be said of the following, which deserves comparison with Housman's parody of Aeschylus:

Who her name hath thus impos'd  
 In strict accordance with th' event —  
     One invisible sure  
 To mortal eyes, yet ruling mortal tongue  
 In that where chance alone appears  
 With prescience of futurity —  
 On Helen, cause of conflict dire,  
     And claim'd with bridegrooms' spears?  
 Since she, such title answering,  
 Of ships the bane, of men, of towns,  
 Forth issuing through her chamber door  
 With hangings veil'd of texture rare

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91 Kennedy, viii-ix.

92 See pp. 316-17 above. Whatever the strictures on the actual translation, Symmons's unrhymed translation on p. 317 reads just as well as his rhymed translation on p. 316.

93 Kennedy, 31-32; Ag. 72-82. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 119.



Sail'd beneath the guidance fair  
Of earth-born Zephyrus.<sup>94</sup>

It is hardly surprising that Kennedy's translation was not reviewed. The only recorded judgement is that of a writer in the Athenaeum, who dismissed it as 'below contempt'.<sup>95</sup> It comes as a surprise to find that Coleridge possessed a copy of Kennedy's book. Now in the British Library, this copy was presented to Coleridge in July 1829 by a friend.<sup>96</sup> Despite Coleridge's habit of filling his books with marginal notes, this particular book has only one such, a note at the foot of pages 38-39, on an alternative reading in a much-disputed line.<sup>97</sup> No doubt Coleridge decided that this gift, even though it came from a dear friend, was not worth further perusal.

The other translation published in 1829 was William Palin's translation of the Persae. William Palin (1803-1882) earned a living as a private tutor for some years before entering Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1833. He was then ordained as a curate and became Rector of Stifford, Essex, where he spent the rest of his life. In his later years, he wrote books on religion and local history.<sup>98</sup> His edition, with a parallel translation, of the Persae was made while he was a private tutor,

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94 Kennedy, 98-99; Ag. 681-92. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 121.

95 Ath, v (1832), 363.

96 BL pressmark C.126.h.16. The title-page bears the inscription: 'Given me by dear Mr Anster, on his visit to us from Ireland, July 1829. S.T. Coleridge.'

97 ὁρόοις ἀέκτοις, Ag. 141. Coleridge's pencilled note has recently been published in The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Marginalia, ed. George Whalley, I.24-25.

98 DNB.

and was intended as the first of a series for the benefit of the youthful student.<sup>99</sup> The aim of his translation was therefore 'rather utility than elegance', to help the student understand the Greek text, and he kept as close as possible to a line-for-line translation, although he hoped that his version was 'not altogether inelegant'.<sup>100</sup> He used Porson's text, with corrections from other editors, and flattered himself that the result would 'be found as correct a text of Aeschylus as has ever appeared'.<sup>101</sup> His intellectual arrogance is matched only by youthful enthusiasm for his project.

It is hard to say whether Palin's version can really be called a verse translation. Although it appears to be such, his preface makes it clear that this is only because he is attempting a line-for-line translation. However, his wish to make it 'not altogether inelegant' indicates that he aspires to something higher than a mere schoolboy 'crib', and he particularly refers readers to lines 818-51 to see what can be done within the limits of strictly literal translations.<sup>102</sup> The lines in question form part of the speech of Darius in which he describes the fate of the Persian army left in Greece, and bids Atossa prepare to meet Xerxes, who is on his way home. The Greek is in iambic trimeters. Palin keeps to his line-for-line translation, but usually forms his lines into blank verse, and ends the scene by incorporating rhyme into Atossa's closing words. He begins the passage like this:

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99 Palin, xii.

100 Palin, vii.

101 Palin, xi.

102 Palin, vii.

And the piles of slain even to the third generation  
 Shall show in silence to the eyes of men,  
 Proudly to think doth mortal not beseem. 820  
 Oppression, springing, hath put forth the blade  
 Of vengeance, whence it reaps a tearful harvest.  
 Seeing such punishment of these,  
 Athens and Greece remember, and let none,  
 His present lot despising, 825  
 Enamour'd of ought else, bliss wasteful shed.  
 Jove is th' avenger of presumptuous thoughts,  
 Stern censor Jove;  
 Him destitute of wisdom, therefore,  
 With prudent counsels teach  
 To cease t' insult the gods with vaunting rashness.<sup>103</sup> 830

There is no doubting the accuracy of his translation, which  
 includes, in line 829, the translation of a disputed reading in  
 apparent agreement with the suggestion that Aeschylus may have  
 written ὡς φρενῶν κεχρημένον ('as one that lacks wisdom').<sup>104</sup>  
 The translation reads well, too, especially lines 818-22; but Palin  
 is sometimes forced into obscurities, as in 'seeing such  
 punishment of these' (l. 823), and the un-English syntax of lines  
 829-31, although easy enough to understand, sounds rather odd.

The same criticism is true of his rhymed translation of  
 Atossa's speech at Pers. 845-51:

Fortune! how many bitter griefs assail,  
 But most upon my spirits preys this ill,  
 To hear my son's disgrace of robes [thus rent]  
 About his person, — which besets him still.  
 But I will go, and vesture from mine house

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103 Palin, 101; Pers. 818-31: 'Heaps of dead shall make known, even to the third generation, a voiceless record for the eyes of men that mortal man needs must not vaunt him overmuch. For presumptuous pride, when it has burgeoned, bears as its fruit a crop of calamity, whence it reaps a plenteous harvest of tears. Mark that such are the penalties for deeds like these and hold Athens and Hellas in your memory. Let no one of you, through disdain of present fortune and lust for more, squander his abundant wealth. Zeus, of a truth, is a chastiser of overweening pride and corrects with heavy hand.' (Weir Smyth)

104 See Aeschylus, Persae, ed. H.D. Broadhead, 206-07 for a discussion of the reading in Pers. 829.

Taking, to meet my child I will essay.  
The dearest, in distress, we'll not betray.<sup>105</sup>

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This passage illustrates his practice of enclosing added words in square brackets (l. 847), as well as his retention of Aeschylean mannerisms if he feels they are comprehensible in English, as in 'To hear my son's disgrace of robes. . . About his person' (ll. 847-48), which is a precise literal translation of the Greek.

His method also works well in translating the lyric passages, as in this strophe taken from the choral lament for the destroyed Persian fleet:

And truly throughout the Asiatic land,  
No more will they live under the Persian laws,  
No more will they pay tribute  
By despotic exactions;  
Nor falling to the earth  
Will they obey, for the kingly  
Power hath perished.<sup>106</sup>

As long as one judges Palin's translation on its own terms, that is, as an aid to students of better quality than the usual schoolboy 'cribs',<sup>107</sup> it is highly commendable, although not likely to find favour with those teachers who disapprove of parallel texts. Apart from the Athenaeum, which sneered at Palin's 'meagre and ragged travesty of English blank verse' and hoped to dissuade

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105 Palin, 103; Pers. 845-51: 'O God! What a host of cruel griefs assails me! But most of all this sorrow wounds me — to hear of the shameful garb that clothes the person of my son. But I will away, and when I have brought seemly raiment from the palace, I will make trial to meet my son; for I will not forsake in his affliction him I love so well.' (Weir Smyth)

106 Palin, 71; Pers. 584-90: 'Not now for long will they that dwell throughout the length and breadth of Asia abide under the sway of the Persians, nor will they pay further tribute at the compulsion of their lord, nor will they prostrate themselves to the earth and do him reverence; since the kingly power hath perished utterly.' (Weir Smyth)

107 Palin sneered at 'the barbarisms of the Hamiltonian trash, and of certain other publications I could name'. (Palin, vii)



Palin from continuing with his project of making similar translations of other plays,<sup>108</sup> the reviews were kind to Palin's Persae.<sup>109</sup> However, the translation cannot have sold well enough to encourage its author, for he published no more.

Finally, in 1829 and 1830 R.A. Willmott included some translations from Euripides and Sophocles in two of his magazine articles. Robert Aris Willmott (1809-1863) was educated at Merchant Taylor's School and Harrow. While at Harrow, from 1825-1828, he edited and published the Harrovian. After leaving school Willmott worked for a short time as a tutor, and also made a living by contributing to various magazines. He studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, from about 1832 until 1841, during which time he continued to rely on journalism for his livelihood. In 1842 he was ordained, and spent most of the remainder of his life as incumbent of St Catherine, Bearwood. He wrote numerous books and magazine articles, and also edited many volumes for Routledge's British Poets series. His most enduring book was Pleasures, Objects and Advantages of Literature (1851), which was in its fifth edition by 1860, and was still in print in 1906.<sup>110</sup>

In 1829 Willmott wrote an article entitled 'The Dramas of Euripides: the Hecuba' for the London Magazine, and included in it three passages of translation.<sup>111</sup> His preference was for such passages as would tug at the heartstrings of his readers, and his

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108 Ath, ii (1829), 467-69.

109 EcR, 3rd s., iii (1830), 376-79; NMM, xxvii (1829), 510-11.

110 DNB; Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part 2, Vol. VI, p. 509.

111 LM, 3rd s., iii (1829), 469-75; Hec. 59-97, 177-215, 905-32.



translation is more of a re-casting of the main ideas in the original, in the form of the saccharine versification that was only too common towards the end of the Romantic period. All three passages are in lyric metre in Greek, which Willmott may have taken as a good excuse for his cavalier treatment of them in English. The third piece, which he entitles 'The Lamentation of Hecuba', although it is in fact a choral ode, begins with the following stanza:

O pride of my country! the cheek of the foeman  
 Shall never more pale at the flash of thy name,  
 The song of thy beauty is wither'd, and no man  
 Will bow down his head at the shrine of thy fame.  
 Lift up thy voice, for the crown of thy brightness,  
 Pour out thy tears for the child at thy knee,  
 Thy altars — the smoke is over their whiteness,  
 Ilium the beautiful, Ilium the free!<sup>112</sup>

The original can scarcely be discerned behind Willmott's very free paraphrase, and this stanza is only too typical of the remainder.

In 1830, following the death of the London Magazine, Willmott wrote for the new Fraser's Magazine. In an article on 'The Minor Greek Poets', Willmott digressed briefly into tragedy, and gave his versions of three short pieces from the Philoctetes, Hecuba and Orestes, again choosing passages brimming with pathos.<sup>113</sup> As with the passages in the London Magazine, Willmott writes a free and much-sentimentalised version of the original lyric passages. The lines translated from Orestes are taken from the beginning of the dialogue between Electra and the Chorus as the latter approaches

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112 LM, 3rd s., iii (1829), 474; Hec. 905-13: 'And you, my native Ilium, will no longer be called one of the unsacked cities; such an enveloping cloud of Greeks conceals you and has destroyed you by the spear, the spear. You have been shorn of your crown of towers, and pitifully defiled with the stain of soot, unhappy town, and I shall walk about you no longer.'

113 FM, ii (1830), 54-55; 57; Phil. 169-90, Hec. 154-76, Or. 136-73.

Orestes, who is fast asleep:

El. Softly, softly, not a sound,  
When thy footstep meets the ground;  
Gently, gently, like the breath  
Of a lute song in its death —  
Like the sighing of a reed, 5  
Longing, murmuring to be freed.

Cho. Listen! doth my whisper soften —  
Maiden, thou hast heard it often.

El. Blessings on thy peaceful feet,  
Hush thy breathing — trembling, sweet; 10  
Come near to me, tell me why,  
Damsels, ye are lingering by.  
The wounded heart is in her nest,  
The mourner's spirit hath found rest. 114

Willmott cobbles together ideas drawn from Or. 136-37 ('Dearest women, come with quiet foot, don't make a sound, don't make a din'), Or. 144-45 ('Ah, my friend, speak to me like the breath from the reed of a slender flute'), Or. 146-47 ('See, my cry is muted like the soft note of a pipe!'), Or. 148-51 ('Yes, like that, lower, lower, approach quietly, quietly approach. Answer me saying for what purpose you have come. For it is some time since he fell asleep') and Or. 156 ('He is still breathing, but he groans faintly'). This procedure cannot strictly be described as translation.

Of this particular piece, Willmott says he has written a metrical version 'for the sake of preserving, in some degree, the linked sweetness of the original',<sup>115</sup> and in introducing the others he makes diffident noises about the inadequacy of his translations. These comments are a salutary reminder that, despite the work of Morehead, Elton and Dale, as well as that of Kennedy and Palin in an inferior class, it was still far from rare for translators to

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114 FM, ii (1830), 57; Or. 136-56.

115 FM, ii (1830), 57.

interpret their chosen authors according to the poetical fads of their own day. The difference between Bland and Willmott is one of poetic fashion rather than one of kind. However, we can assume that Elton and Dale reached a fairly wide audience, which would more than compensate for the more paraphrastic and unsatisfactory translations. Apart from this trend towards closer and truer translations, the years between 1819 and 1830 also saw an increase in the number of full-length translations, an increase in translations of Aeschylus, and a marked decrease in translations of Euripides. The last mentioned is very likely the result of Schlegel's attack on Euripides, and becomes even more marked in the third and last period.

## CHAPTER 10. THE VERSE TRANSLATIONS: FULL FLOOD, 1831-1840

A love of antique poetry for poetry's sake, is doubtless more common now, than it has ever been before.

MR, 1837, vol. iii, 417.

The third period begins with yet another translation of the Agamemnon, a very grandly printed version by John Scandrett Harford. Published in 1831 by John Murray, and embellished with a selection of Flaxman's engravings, there was one edition priced at eighteen shillings and a more expensive edition on India Paper at forty-two shillings. Harford (1785-1866), a banker's son, was born at Blaise Castle, a place better known as the one not visited by Catherine Morland in Northanger Abbey. He was privately educated, and became deeply religious after the untimely death of his brother in 1804. He supported the Church Missionary Society and the Bible Society, and became the friend of Hannah More and William Wilberforce. In 1815-1817 he visited Paris and Rome, during which time he formed a collection of paintings; and in 1821 he inherited property in Cardiganshire, from which he gave the site of the castle of Lampeter for the foundation of a college (St David's College). He was elected Member of Parliament for the borough of Cardigan in 1841, but lost his seat about nine months later because of some electoral irregularity. He died at Blaise Castle on 16 April 1866.<sup>1</sup>

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1 DNB.

Figure 6 Verse Translations and Translators, 1831-1840

<u>Date</u>	<u>Work or Passage(s) Translated</u>	<u>Translator</u>
1831	Aeschylus, <u>Agamemnon</u>	J.S. Harford
1832	<u>Specimens from Sophocles</u>	Anon.
	<u>Selections from Choric Poetry</u>	J. Anstice
	Aeschylus, <u>Agamemnon</u>	T. Medwin
	Aeschylus, <u>Choephoroe</u>	T. Medwin
	Aeschylus, <u>Prometheus</u>	T. Medwin
	<u>Ag.</u> 281-311	R.A. Willmott
	<u>Or.</u> 152-81, 211-306	R.A. Willmott
1833	Aeschylus, <u>Persians</u>	T. Medwin
	Aeschylus, <u>Prometheus</u>	E. Barrett
	Aeschylus, <u>Seven before Thebes</u>	T. Medwin
1834	Aeschylus, <u>Eumenides</u>	T. Medwin
1835	Aeschylus, <u>Prometheus</u>	G.C. Fox
	Sophocles, <u>Electra</u>	G.C. Fox
1836	Aeschylus, <u>Prometheus</u>	M.J. Chapman
	<u>Ag.</u> 737-42, 1178-97; <u>Or.</u> 140-85; <u>Eur. Supp.</u> 860-71; <u>OC.</u> 668-719	Anon.
1837	Aeschylus, <u>Eumenides</u>	M.J. Chapman
	Aeschylus, <u>Prometheus</u>	T. Medwin
	Passages from Aesch. and Soph.	Lord Lytton
1838	Aeschylus, <u>Agamemnon</u>	T. Medwin
	Euripides, <u>Alcestis</u>	M.J. Chapman
1839	Aeschylus, <u>Agamemnon</u>	G.C. Fox
	Aeschylus, <u>Prometheus</u>	G.C. Fox
	Aeschylus, <u>Eumenides</u>	M.J. Chapman



Apart from his translation of the Agamemnon, he wrote several books, most of them biographies. His academic qualifications for translation from Greek are slight, for although he was admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge as a pensioner on 11 November 1820, there is some doubt about whether he actually studied there.<sup>2</sup> Oxford University gave him the degree of D.C.L. in June 1822,<sup>3</sup> but one suspects that this award was not unconnected with Harford's possession of much money and property, and had nothing to do with scholastic accomplishments. According to Harford himself, he had long admired and re-read the Agamemnon, and began translating portions of it as a recreation, and ended by translating the whole play. This, he said, had been done some years previously, and he was now publishing the translation at the suggestion of various learned friends.<sup>4</sup>

Harford discussed the theory of translation at some length in his preface, and indicated a preference for as literal a translation as was possible. However, he found considerable stumbling-blocks in the difference in idiom between English and Greek:

Occasionally the English idiom conforms with singular aptitude to classical phraseology, especially in the more colloquial scenes of the Grecian dramatists; but when conversation becomes elevated into poetry, or when proverbial, humorous, or figurative passages occur, it will frequently happen that the only just mode of conveying any correct impression of their force or beauty, is to search our language for expressions of corresponding spirit and meaning, though often widely distant from verbal resemblance. Any considerable

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2 The Biographical Register of Christ's College, 1505-1905, II. 402, says there is no record of residence, but Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part 2, Vol. III, p. 242, asserts that Harford kept 'several terms' at Cambridge.

3 Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part 2, Vol. III, p.242.

4 Harford, xiv.

departure from this degree of fidelity can only be justified in the case of such extraordinary conciseness or obscurity as defies all but very free translation.<sup>5</sup>

He applied this to the Agamemnon, finding that the dialogue could usually be faithfully translated, but that the particular style of Aeschylus in his choral odes necessitated a considerable amount of paraphrase if any sense was to be made of it. While his findings are true in general, he seems either to be assuming a lower standard of intelligence in his readers than is reasonable, or to be apologising in advance for his own lack of poetic vision. The English language has the good fortune to be especially rich in idioms and metaphors, and (in the right hands) is uniquely able to cope with the bold, experimental phraseology of Aeschylus. As long as the idiom translated literally from Greek to English can be understood, there seems to be no good reason for rewriting it out of all recognition, or for omitting it altogether. But it is characteristic of Harford's translation technique that he constantly turns away and evades approaching difficulties, not so much to aid his readers, as to make his own task less arduous. His prefatory remarks are merely an admission of his own inadequacy disguised as a declaration of intent.

Harford's claim to have aimed at close translation of the dialogue is fair enough. He rarely adds more than the occasional word, when he needs to fill out a line, and he is accurate. His translation begins as follows:

Grant me, ye gods, deliverance from these toils,  
This annual watch, which, like a dog, I keep,  
Placed on the summit of the royal house  
Of the Atridae — whence my eyes survey  
The choir of nightly stars, and those bright orbs,

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5 Harford, ix-x.

Regents in heaven, whose daily changes bring  
 Winter and summer in their course to man.  
 The torch symbolical, the herald flame,  
 Long-promised signal of the fall of Troy,  
 I now look out for — so a woman wills  
 Of manly counsels, anxious for th' event.<sup>6</sup>

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This is typical of Harford's method: close translation is abandoned when an unusual idiom or image presents itself. The phrase

λαμπροὺς δυνάστας ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι

(Ag. 6: 'bright potentates, conspicuous in the sky') is easily understood as meaning the brighter stars in the sky, but Harford, apparently finding some difficulty in this, thinks fit to enfeeble the expression by explaining its meaning within the text (ll. 5-6) and then even adds a learned footnote to assure his readers that he was aware of the correct translation. The same purpose is behind his translation of

λαμπάδος τὸ σύμβολον  
 αὐγὴν πυρὸς φέρουσαν ἐκ Τροίας φάτιν  
 ἀλώσιμόν τε βάζειν

(Ag. 8-10: 'the signal of the torch, the beam of fire bringing news from Troy and the report of its capture') in a rearranged and simplified form in lines 8-9. The word 'long-promised' is imported to fill out the line as well as to explain the purpose of the Watchman's 'annual watch' (l. 2); the idea of 'herald', drawn from φάτιν ('news') and βάζειν ('report') is transferred to the 'flame', in order to explain its purpose: all quite unnecessary.

The same fear of unusual imagery is discernible throughout the translation. For example, the Herald's account of the storm at sea is begun as follows:

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6 Harford, 198-99; Ag. 1-11. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 113.

'Midst brooding darkness swell'd the raging deep,  
 Ship against ship by Thracian blasts was hurled,  
 Lashed by the whirlwind's fury, and engulfed  
 By the wide-gaping surge, their gallant forms  
 Were seen no more — the pilot's art was vain. 5  
 The radiant morn beheld th' Aegean sea  
 With naval spoils, and with the corpses pale  
 Of Grecian warriors strown.<sup>7</sup>

In Ag. 655-57, Aeschylus uses an unusual metaphor for the storm-tossed fleet: it is likened to a flock of sheep jostling together, stirred into confusion by a malignant shepherd. The key words of the metaphor are *κεροτυπούμεναι* (Ag. 655: 'butting') and *πομῆνος κακῷ* (Ag. 657: 'evil shepherd'). Harford ignores the metaphor altogether and keeps to language which describes the storm more simply and less adventurously (ll. 3-5). The 'pilot' in line 5 is no more than a nod in the direction of the shepherd. Some lines later, Aeschylus used a very unusual image for the corpses scattered on the sea, which he likens to flowers (Ag. 659). Unusual it may be, but it is comprehensible, not to say powerfully effective, and should be kept. Harford shirks the opportunity and translates by 'strown' (l. 8). Read as a piece of English verse, Harford's translation of this passage is perfectly competent, but he cannot claim to have translated Aeschylus if he ignores the most salient feature of Aeschylean style.

As the preface leads us to expect, the choral odes are more freely translated, and even less like Aeschylus. Naturally, the pun on Helen's name has no place in Harford's translation, but

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7 Harford, 198-99; Ag. 653-60: 'In the night-time arose the mischief from the cruel surge. Beneath blasts from Thrace ship dashed against ship; and they, gored violently by the furious hurricane and rush of pelting rain, were swept out of sight by the whirling gust of an evil shepherd. But when the radiant light of the sun uprose we beheld the Aegean flowering with corpses of Achaean men and wreckage of ships.' (Weir Smyth)



earns a contemptuous footnote instead:

What power unseen, whose piercing eye  
 Sees through the hidden depths of fate,  
 'Twixt Helen's name and destiny  
 Such wondrous semblance could create?  
 War-stirring name! fleets, armies, states  
 Destruction sealed, when, through the latticed gates  
 Her light form gliding, swift the Zephyrs bore  
 Their beauteous charge the billows o'er.<sup>8</sup>

There is little variety in rhythm, line-length or tone in Harford's choral odes, which reduce Aeschylus to monotonous mediocrity. One notable variation occurs in the translation of the last antistrophe of the second stasimon:

Nor smoky roofs, nor scanty stores,  
 Nor poverty's low shed,  
 Can quench the light which justice pours  
 Around the humblest head:  
 In her bright train, linked hand in hand, 5  
 Around the kindred virtues take their stand —  
 Where'er the traces of their steps are found  
 'Tis holy, consecrated ground;  
 But from the gilded roofs, the pompous scene  
 In lofty state where blood-stained wretches reign, 10  
 Th' indignant goddess turns with angry mien,  
 Nor treats ignoble wealth with less disdain. —  
 Pure are her ways, though oft to mortal eye  
 Beset they seem with clouds, and wrapped in mystery.<sup>9</sup>

Lines 5-8 and 13-14 are Harford's own additions, and the rest of the passage is rewritten, in order to transform what is laconic in Greek into something more highly wrought in English. Admittedly, the text is corrupt and has received much editorial attention, but the basic thought is clear enough, and Harford (who seems to have relied mainly on Blomfield's edition) seems to understand it. Yet he not only rewrites the antistrophe as a passable imitation of an

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8 Harford, 200-01; Ag. 681-92. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 121. In his footnote, Harford sneers at the 'absurd punning' and claims that 'this mass of Greek compounds' cannot be translated into English.

9 Harford, 206-07; Ag. 772-81. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 122.



eighteenth-century ode, but also ignores the fact that the strophe, which was also concerned with personified abstractions, ought to have retained its close links with the antistrophe, but does not.

The reviewers did not think much of Harford's translation, despite its fine India Paper and copious illustrations, and its long introductory essay on Greek drama. The New Monthly Magazine was the kindest, saying that though the translation was 'respectable' and the book 'a work of elegance and scholarship', it was too expensive for present tastes.<sup>10</sup> The Gentleman's Magazine, Literary Gazette and British Critic were all discouraging.<sup>11</sup> Worst of all was the Athenaeum, which drew attention to the high quality of the paper, bindings and illustrations, which it took to be evidence of 'the paternal affection of the author', but which was out of all proportion to the inferior quality of the contents.<sup>12</sup> In view of this harsh criticism, sales cannot have been very great, except perhaps to those looking for fine bindings to grace their library shelves.

The following year, 1832, was the most fruitful of the decade, with two volumes of translated passages, as well as two complete plays separately published, a third play published in a magazine and two short passages contained within magazine articles on Greek tragedy. These two short passages were probably both the work of R.A. Willmott. One of them is in Willmott's article 'The Spirit of the Greek Dramatic Poets. The Agamemnon of Aeschylus', in the

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10 NMM, xxxvi (1832), 298-99.

11 GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 31-32; LG, xvi (1832), 322-24; BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 378.

12 Ath, v (1832), 334-35.

New Monthly Magazine.<sup>13</sup> Willmott criticised Potter's translation of Clytemnestra's speech describing the chain of beacons between Troy and Argos, and offered a version of his own, in a metre combining short, rapid lines with an irregular rhyme scheme, which he hoped was closer to the vigour of the Greek.<sup>14</sup> Although Willmott has deliberately abandoned the custom of translating Greek iambic trimeters into blank verse or heroic couplets, his lines are of approximately equal length and to this extent imitate the form of the original:

The God of Fire on Ida's Steep	
Sent forth the living flame;	
From watch to watch, with giant-leap,	
Along the mountain-tops it came,	
Unto Lemnos' Hill of fame.	5
Up Athos, where the Spirit dwells,	
The torch of fire doth spring,	
Flashing from its lofty track	
Along dark Ocean's mighty back,	
The red light of its journeying.	10
Golden-beaming, like the Sun,	
It rushes on its pathway still —	
Breaking upon the lifted eyes	
Of the watchman on Macistus' hill.	
Brief time I ween the sign they kept,	15
Not one upon the mountain slept,	
On and on the bright flame swept!	
Away — away — the herald darted,	
On far Euripus' streams it fell:	
The night-guards on Messapion started;	20
They knew the signal well.	
The fire knoweth not decay,	
A heap of mountain heather dry	
Casteth up the flame on high,	
And it speedeth on its way. <sup>15</sup>	25

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13 See Appendix 5, and Chapter 5, pp. 142-43.

14 NMM, xxxv (1832), 221-22; Ag. 281-311.

15 NMM, xxv (1832), 221; Ag. 281-95: 'Hephaestus, from Ida speeding forth his brilliant blaze. Beacon passed beacon on to us by courier-flame: Ida, to the Hermaean scaur in Lemnos; to the mighty blaze upon the island succeeded, third, the summit of Athos sacred unto Zeus; and, soaring high aloft so as to arch the main, the flame, travelling joyously onward in its strength . . . the pine-wood torch, its golden-beamed light, as another

There are several added words and phrases, but on the whole they are drawn from the Greek text and not from the translator's imagination. In lines 3-4, for example, the words 'From watch to watch. . . it came' are a translation of *φρυκτὸς δὲ φρυκτὸν. . . ἔπεμπεν* (*Ag.* 282-83: 'beacon sent on beacon'), but the remainder is an added explanation of the course taken by the chain of beacons. The Greek adjective *χρυσόφειγγός* (*Ag.* 288: 'golden-beamed') is translated twice, by 'red light' (l. 10) and 'golden-beaming' (l. 11). Willmott may again have felt the need to explain, but is less successful this time, as his double translation dilutes the power of Aeschylus' single descriptive compound. Other additions help to maintain the feeling of breathless speed with which the watchers pass on the fiery message: 'Breaking upon the lifted eyes' (l. 13) and 'On and on the bright flame swept' (l. 17). The only additions which are entirely unnecessary are lines 21-22; they could easily be omitted without any loss, either to the understanding of the meaning of the passage, or to the impression of speed. Willmott's main criticism of Potter's translation was that Potter had wilfully substituted metaphors of his own for the excellent and perfectly comprehensible metaphors of Aeschylus. In his own version, Willmott has therefore made a special effort to avoid this error and as a result has written a translation which is far closer to the letter and spirit of his original author than any of his

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sun, passing the message on to the watch-towers of Macistus. He, delaying not nor heedlessly overcome by sleep, neglected not his part as messenger. Far over Euripus' stream came the beacon-light and gave the signal to the sentinels on Messapion. They, kindling a heap of withered heather, lit up their answering blaze and sped the message on.' (Weir Smyth)

earlier translations.

The other passage is in the article on 'The Characters of the Greek Dramatic Poets' in the British Critic.<sup>16</sup> Although it is anonymous, it is very similar in style to Willmott's articles in other magazines, with its metaphorical language and its opening reference to Greek literature as a retreat from the tumult of the modern world, and is undoubtedly his work.<sup>17</sup> Willmott ends his article with a translation of a scene from the Orestes,<sup>18</sup> which seems to have been his favourite play because of the sentimentality of its plot and style. It is this that guides Willmott in his translation, which, although again fairly close, loses no opportunity to make the most of the sentimentality he finds in the original:

Cho. Dost thou see — he moveth in the clothes.

El. Wretched that thou art, thy voice hath cast  
His slumber from him.

Cho. He sleeps again. —

El. Thou sayest well.

Cho. Come holy, holy, Night,  
    Arise from Lethe's spring —  
For the heart that wept in the morning light  
    May sleep beneath thy wing!  
Come, come, with thy sable plume  
From Erebus deep gloom,  
To Agamemnon's lonely hearth, —  
Our hearts are bow'd unto the earth;  
Yea, we are torn with grief and fear,  
Oh bring thy shadows here!<sup>19</sup>

The less important of the volumes of translated passages

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16 See Appendix 5, and Chapter 5, p. 122.

17 Compare BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 371 with NMM, xxxv (1832), 214-15.

18 BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 394-97; Or. 152-81, 211-306.

19 BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 394; Or. 165-81. For translation, see Chapter 9, note 45.



published in 1832 was an anonymous 32-page pamphlet entitled Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles; translated into English Verse. With a Few Original Pieces. The author hoped to arouse enough interest in his specimens to justify a larger and longer translation,<sup>20</sup> and offered complete translations of two choral odes from the Oedipus Tyrannus, three from the Oedipus Coloneus and one from the Antigone as a sample of what he could do.<sup>21</sup> The anonymous translator shows no great versatility in his versification, and no great poetic imagination in his choice and arrangement of words. He invariably uses a very simple rhyme-scheme, and makes little effort to vary metre from one choral ode to the next. His translations are not particularly close, and have little life in them. For example:

Where Mount Parnassus' snowy head is rear'd,  
A heav'nly oracle but late appear'd,  
Directing that we all alike should strive  
The hidden culprit from his lair to drive:  
Through the wild wood he takes his lonely way,  
Or spends in mountain caves the joyless day,  
And like a wandering bull reluctant driv'n  
He shuns the oracles at Delphi giv'n; —  
But they still vigorous remain,<sup>22</sup>  
Nor can his efforts make them vain.

Surprisingly, this pamphlet received several reviews, which ranged from mild patronage to contemptuous dismissal. The writer in the Gentleman's Magazine even couched his review in rhyme; while the Athenaeum advised the presumably youthful author to acquire some maturity before embarking on any longer work of

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20 Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles, 3.

21 These are listed in Appendix 2, Section A (iii).

22 Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles, 10; OT. 473-82. For translation, see Chapter 9, note 57.



translation.<sup>23</sup>

The second collection of translated passages was larger and more extensive. This was Selections from the Choric Poetry of the Greek Dramatic Writers by Joseph Anstice. Although he died young, Joseph Anstice (1808-1836) had a remarkably successful academic career. He attended Westminster School, and from there went to Christ Church, Oxford, where he won the Newdigate Prize in 1828 for his poem Richard Coeur de Lion, and another prize for an essay on Roman art and literature. After graduating B.A. in 1831 he was immediately appointed Professor of Classical Literature in King's College, London, but had to resign in 1835 owing to ill health and died at Torquay a few months later. Apart from his translations from Greek drama, he also published his prize-winning poem and essay, and his inaugural lecture at King's College.<sup>24</sup>

The translations, except for one from Aristophanes, were entirely taken from the three tragedians. Of the 31 choral odes selected, 6 are from Aeschylus, 10 from Sophocles and 16 from Euripides; but in addition to these long extracts, Anstice has put many more translations into his copious footnotes, from Italian, French and German poetry as well as from Greek and Latin. Among the Greek translations in the footnotes are another seventeen from Greek tragedy — most of them no more than about ten lines in length, although Anstice did manage to find space for the long soliloquy over the funeral urn from Sophocles' Electra, which he

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23 GM, cii<sup>1</sup> (1832), 335; Ath, v (1832), 302. For the other reviews, see Appendix 4, Section A.

24 DNB; GM, n.s., v (1836), 552-53.

has translated into rhyming couplets.<sup>25</sup>

But despite Anstice's display of great erudition, his translations have little to recommend them. Regardless of the author, style and tone of the original odes, they are nearly all treated alike, and are usually compressed into the strait-jacket of the metre best known from L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, but employed here with none of Milton's metrical skill. The long parodos from the Agamemnon, which surely cries out for some sort of variety as the Chorus turn their thoughts one way and another, is written in the same monotone throughout, with only a few modest variations in metre. Anstice translates the reflections of the old men on their enfeebled state like this:

Withered age was little prized;	
Chiefs our worthless aid despised;	
All unmeet for warlike toil,	
We were left on Argive soil,	
There, with feebleness opprest,	5
On the friendly staff to rest.	
Childhood's strength alone is ours;	
Ere expand the youthful powers,	
Shrined within the bosom's cell	
Mars will never deign to dwell.	10
When the leaf of life is sere,	
Age as weakly wields the spear,	
Age, no more in battle strong,	
Creeps on borrowed stay along,	
Doting in its last decay,	15
Shadowy dream that stalks by day.	<sup>26</sup>

This technique of debilitated paraphrase is typical of Anstice's work as a whole. The basic idea of the original is retained, but the words themselves are rewrought in such a way as to neutralise the stylistic individuality of the original. The translation is yet farther removed from the original by the addition of words and

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25 Anstice's translations are included in Appendix 2, Section A (iii).

26 Anstice, 6-9; Ag. 72-82. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 119.

phrases that have no justification. Here, for example, the sticks on which the old men lean are described as 'friendly' (l. 6) and 'borrowed' (l. 14), and lines 12 and 15 are both added. Anstice is, of course, working on the theme of the passage, the statement of the Chorus that they are too old to fight; but whereas Aeschylus has merely stated the fact and made his point by a simple comparison of childhood and old age, Anstice has gone too far in dragging in implications of self-pity and incipient senility.

The following stanza from his translation of the second stasimon in the Antigone shows how he occasionally ventures slight variations on his basic metre, while keeping to his technique of free paraphrase:

How blest are those, untaught to drain	
Retribution's cup of pain!	
Sorrow's heaven-commissioned shock	
Can the mightiest palace rock.	
Tremble then the deep foundations;	5
Then, through countless generations,	
Gathering on to son from sire,	
Higher raves the storm and higher!	
As when inclement blasts of Thrace	
Heave from its depths the ocean,	10
Scudding in rapid race,	
Through its darkling caves,	
The swelling waves	
Set the stormy sands in motion:	
Each after each, with sullen roar,	15
Sweeps the abyss's miry floor,	
The waters splash,	
The billows lash	
The groaning, echoing shore. <sup>27</sup>	

Anstice uses his rhyming couplets for the maxims of Ant. 582-85, then switches to a more 'lyric' measure for the simile in Ant. 586-91, presumably hoping to match the effects of the sea-storm. Such effects as he does manage to achieve are ruined by the bathos

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27 Anstice, 121; Ant. 582-91. For translation, see Chapter 9, note 55.

of 'The waters splash' in line 17. His efforts to improve on the effective understatement of Sophocles are only too clear in the first half of the stanza. In Ant. 582-85, Sophocles uses two metaphors, to which he merely alludes in no more than two words — the tasting metaphor in ἀγευστος (Ant. 582: 'not tasted'), and the storm metaphor in σεισθῆ (Ant. 583: 'has been shaken') upon which the closing simile depends. Anstice seizes on these words for expansion into more explicit (and less effective) imagery in lines 1-2 and 3-8 respectively. The latter metaphor is inflated out of all recognition.

Very occasionally, Anstice abandons the metre on which he leans as feebly as the old men in his lines from the Agamemnon, and tries his hand at some other verse-form. He takes an ode from the Electra of Euripides, which tells an old story, and puts his translation into ballad-stanzas:

There is a tale my mother told;  
The peasant knows it still,  
Who well has conned the legends old  
Of Argos' haunted hill.

'Tis said that Pan, whose sylvan reed  
Oft echoes down the glade,  
A golden lamb of wondrous breed  
To Atreus' court conveyed.

5

In piercing tone, from steps of stone,  
The herald cried: 'Come all,  
Nor fear to see the prodigy  
That decks your monarch's stall,'

10

Then Atreus' kin came trooping in. . .<sup>28</sup>

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- 28 Anstice, 207-08; Eur. El. 699-712: 'A story of the Argive mountains is told in hoary tales of how Pan, steward of the countryside, blowing a sweet-strained tune on his harmonious pipes, brought from under its mother a golden, fair-fleeced lamb. And standing on the platform of stone, the herald cried out: "Men of Mycenae, come to the market-place, to look upon the awesome portent of the blessed rulers." And the dancers honoured the house of the Atreidae.'



Anstice's ballad reads quite well, although one is always conscious of a certain quaintness and assumed simplicity, but whether it can fairly be called a translation is another matter. Obviously, Anstice has taken his cue from the statement that the tale of the golden lamb is very old (El. 701, ἐν πολιαῖσι . . . φάμαις 'in tales hoary with age'), and from the elliptic narrative technique, but he has at the same time ignored the very intricate language and syntax used by Euripides. Indeed, almost the whole of Anstice's first stanza is a worked-up version of the 'hoary tale' idea, intended to support his rewriting it as a ballad. Thereafter, he simplifies where Euripides is ornate, and adds further pseudo-balladry whenever he can, as in lines 5 and 12, and seizes whatever chances there are to import balladic double-rhymes, as in lines 9 and 13. The result is a clever mock-ballad, but not Euripidean.

Because of the contemporary interest in Greek tragedy, and doubtless also because of the great esteem in which Anstice appears to have been held, his Selections earned more critical acclaim than they really deserved. The Metropolitan thought they were as good as Moore's Anacreon,<sup>29</sup> while the New Monthly Magazine described this 'very pleasing little volume' as containing translations which were generally 'spirited and elegant as well as faithful'.<sup>30</sup> The Athenaeum found fault with the separation of the choruses from the plays to which they belonged, but not with the actual execution of the translations.<sup>31</sup> The British Critic also

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29 Met, vi (1833), 84.

30 NMM, xxxvii (1833), 243.

31 Ath, v (1832), 789.



thought the translations showed a good grasp of English metre and sound scholarship, and found the whole volume to be extraordinarily promising.<sup>32</sup> It was left to the Literary Gazette and the Gentleman's Magazine to sound the only sour note. While the Gentleman's Magazine offered only a brief and lukewarm review, the Literary Gazette used the occasion to print a leading article on the principles of translation and castigate Anstice for erasing the distinguishing features of his authors: 'His book is a comedy of errors, in which we are perpetually mistaking one writer for another.'<sup>33</sup> The preponderance of favourable reviews might well have encouraged Anstice to do further translation work if he had not died so young.

It was also in 1832 that Thomas Medwin made his bid for fame and money as a translator. Thomas Medwin (1788-1869) has long been a shadowy figure, known only as a dull-witted and somewhat unreliable biographer of Shelley and Byron; but a recent biography by Ernest J. Lovell,<sup>34</sup> although at times striving too hard to rehabilitate Medwin, has done much to dispel the obscurity. Medwin first made friends with Shelley, who was his second cousin, when they were at school together at Syon House between 1802 and 1804.<sup>35</sup> Medwin was at Oxford for a short time, leaving without a degree before Shelley's arrival there in 1810.<sup>36</sup> His father, who

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32 BC, 4th s., xiii (1833), 399-405.

33 LG, xvii (1833), 49-50. See also GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 135-36.

34 Ernest J. Lovell, Jr., Captain Medwin: Friend of Byron and Shelley.

35 Lovell, 17-19.

36 Lovell, 19.

had hoped to see young Thomas become a lawyer like himself, was infuriated by his son's improvidence and sudden decision to join the army in 1812.<sup>37</sup> After six years with his regiment in India, where he saw active service, Medwin returned to England in 1819, on half pay and in indifferent health.<sup>38</sup> Making his way to Geneva, he made friends with Edward Williams, published his first poem, Oswald and Edwin, and re-established contact with Shelley, who was by then living in Pisa.<sup>39</sup> Medwin soon joined the Shelleys and stayed with them in Pisa for two long periods between 1820 and 1822, sharing their pastimes of reading and discussing poetry.<sup>40</sup>

His conversations with Shelley included discussions of Aeschylus, during one of which Shelley actually translated orally for Medwin the whole of the Prometheus.<sup>41</sup> This incident seems to have made a considerable impression on Medwin, for he later acknowledged that whatever merit there was in his own translation of that play, it was 'much due to the recollection of his [Shelley's] words, which often flowed on line after line in blank verse, into which very harmonious prose resolves itself naturally'.<sup>42</sup> Medwin and Shelley also studied the Agamemnon in the company of the exiled Greek Prince Mavrocordato, the two latter men being, in Medwin's opinion, 'two of the most elegant, not to say the best scholars I have ever known'.<sup>43</sup> Medwin was

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37 Lovell, 23-24.

38 Lovell, 25-58.

39 Lovell, 58-70.

40 Lovell, 70-110.

41 Lovell, 75.

42 Medwin, Life of Shelley, 242-43.

43 Preface to Medwin's Prometheus (1832), v. See also Medwin, Life of Shelley, 263.

introduced to Byron on 20 November 1821, and Aeschylus seems occasionally to have figured in their subsequent conversations.<sup>44</sup>

Medwin was away in Geneva at the time of Shelley's death, and although he hastened back to Pisa as soon as he heard the news, he arrived just too late to witness Shelley's cremation.<sup>45</sup> There was now nothing to keep Medwin in Italy, and for the next few years he divided his time between London and Paris, socialising and overspending.<sup>46</sup> In 1824 he solved his immediate financial problems by selling his Conversations of Lord Byron for £500 and later by marrying a wealthy Baroness in Lausanne.<sup>47</sup> He and his wife settled in Florence, and Medwin returned to his favourite occupation of moving in expensive company; but by 1828 he had separated from his wife and had also lost a great deal of money by speculating in Italian oil paintings, which led to his being sued in 1830 for debts of 30, 000 lire.<sup>48</sup> In the meantime his father had died, and thwarted his son's expectations by leaving him only ten guineas for a memorial ring.<sup>49</sup> Moving to Genoa, Medwin determined to restore his fortunes by writing. His first and most ambitious attempt was a poetic drama called Prometheus the Fire-Bearer, which dealt with the first part of the Prometheus story, and which he dedicated to Shelley. This play was never published in English, but was translated into Italian and published in Genoa

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44 Medwin's Conversations of Lord Byron, 156.

45 Lovell, 114-16.

46 Lovell, 122-58.

47 Lovell, 159-72.

48 Lovell, 204-41.

49 Lovell, 239.

in 1830.<sup>50</sup> He next wrote a prose play, 'The Conspiracy of Fieschi', which so irritated the authorities that he was expelled from Genoa and returned to England in 1831.<sup>51</sup>

Before his actual arrival in England, he had written to the publisher Colburn, offering him four manuscripts as security against a loan of £50. Among these manuscripts was 'a translation of Aeschylus in 2 Volumes'.<sup>52</sup> Colburn certainly did not publish any of these manuscripts, and may not even have lent Medwin any money, so that Medwin was forced to look for other sources of finance.<sup>53</sup> Another publisher, William Pickering, showed more interest in Medwin's translations, and in April and May 1832 he published the translations of the Prometheus and Agamemnon respectively. It is not clear which or how many of Aeschylus' plays were in the '2 Volumes' offered to Colburn, but it is quite possible that at this stage Medwin had translated only the two plays published by Pickering. In fact, his translation of the Prometheus had been in existence for some years already, and had been previously published in Siena in 1827.<sup>54</sup>

Medwin seems to have been highly dissatisfied with this earlier version, for he revised it extensively before it was republished in 1832. For example, the opening lines of Prometheus' first long speech begin as follows in the Siena (1827) edition:

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50 Lovell, 244-48.

51 Lovell, 248-49.

52 Lovell, 250.

53 Lovell, 250-53, 256-65.

54 The BL has a copy of the Siena (1827) edition of Medwin's Prometheus, inscribed on the fly-leaf, 'To Frank Mills Esq from the Author Florence 11 Dec 1827', and signed 'by T. Medwin' under the title on the title-page. In the text there are many pencil corrections, apparently in Medwin's hand. (BL, 833.h.i)



Thou circum-ambient ether! ye winged winds!  
 Ye river-springs! and ocean-billows! ye  
 That countless in your multitudes rejoice!  
 Earth, universal mother of all life!  
 Thou all-beholding circle of the sun! 5  
 You, I invoke! look on me, what I suffer,  
 From Gods, a God! bear witness! and behold  
 What infinite agonies I have to bear,  
 Infinite ages! see! with what a chain  
 This new-raised tyrant of the Gods has bound me! 10  
 Ai! Ai! the present, and the coming lot!  
 Eternity of agonies, woe for ever!  
 And must it have no respite, know no end?<sup>55</sup>

The revised version in the London (1832) edition is:

Best and divinest air! ye swift-winged winds!  
 Ye river-springs! and ocean-billows! ye  
 That countless in your multitudes laugh out  
 With long loud peals — exulting to be free!  
 Earth, universal mother of all life! 5  
 And thou, O sun, whose eye pierces all nature,  
 You I invoke! look on me, what I suffer,  
 From Gods, a God! I call on you, behold  
 What infinite agonies I have to bear  
 Infinite ages! witness what vile chains 10  
 This new-raised king of the Gods has forged for me.  
 Ai! Ai! the present, and the coming lot!  
 Eternity of agonies! woe for ever!  
 And must it last for ever, know no respite?<sup>56</sup>

This is interesting, because it shows that Medwin, while aware of  
 the precise meaning of his text, was at the same time anxious to  
 write living English poetry. In the first line, he has rejected  
 'circum-ambient', which has no equivalent in the Greek, in favour  
 of 'best and divinest', which strives to represent the full meaning

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55 Medwin's Prometheus (1827), 11; PV. 88-100: 'O thou bright sky  
 of heaven, ye swift-winged breezes, ye river-waters, and  
 multitudinous laughter of the waves of ocean, O universal  
 mother Earth, and thou, all-seeing orb of the sun, to you I  
 call! Behold what I, a god, endure of evil from the gods.  
 Behold, with what shameful woes I am racked and must wrestle  
 throughout the countless years of time apportioned me. Such is  
 the ignominious bondage the new Commander of the Blessed hath  
 contrived against me. Woe! Woe! For misery present and misery  
 to come I groan, no knowing where it is fated deliverance from  
 these woes shall rise.' (Weir Smyth)

56 Medwin's Prometheus (1832), 13.



of δῖος (PV. 87); and has extended 'winged' to 'swift-winged', which is a precise translation of ταχύπτεροι (PV. 88). The famous phrase ποντίων τε κυμάτων ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα (PV. 89-90: 'the numberless laughter of the sea-waves') was translated quite literally in the 1827 edition; but Medwin's poetic ear, offended by the barren unmusicality of his third line, has prompted the rewritten and expanded version of 1832:

That countless in your multitudes laugh out  
With long loud peals — exulting to be free (ll. 3-4).

The success of the 'long loud peals' is questionable, but to make the sea-waves rejoice in their freedom is a fair interpretation of the unspoken thoughts of Prometheus, who is suffering the first moments of his enchainment, and who has, in ταχύπτεροι, already used a word contrasting the freedom of the winds with his own captivity. Again, in line 5 of the 1827 edition, Medwin has given a literally correct translation of τὸν πανόπτην κύκλον ἡλίου (PV. 91), but replaced it in the 1832 edition with a freer, but more poetically successful version, which is not without Aeschylean flavour:

O sun, whose eye pierces all nature (l. 6).

The Aeschylean flavour is one of the most welcome features of Medwin's whole translation of the Prometheus. He always writes as close a translation as possible, while avoiding a purely literal and unpoetic version. When he paraphrases, he generally keeps to a transposition of the ideas in the Greek text, and only rarely adds unnecessary material of his own. Although he often drops some typically Aeschylean word or phrase, finding it awkward in English, he often also makes good the loss by a new word or phrase with similar imagery and tone. For the first time, Aeschylus has

a translator who is prepared to make a sustained effort to transpose his words, ideas and imagery all at the same time.

In the dialogue, where Medwin uses the customary blank verse, his translation is comparatively close. For example:

For they had eyes, and yet they saw not; ears  
 Had they, and they did not hear; but like  
 Disjointed images in dreams, that have  
 No order or connexion, they beheld  
 All things in the distorted mirror of 5  
 Their vain imaginations.....not as now,  
 They built them houses, to let in the beams  
 Of light, and warmth, they had no works of wood,  
 Or stone, but underneath the ground, in cells, 10  
 And sun-unvisited caves, resembling more  
 The mansions of the dead, than dwellings fit  
 For man, and living beings, they abode  
 Like delving ants.....nor had they certain signs,  
 By which to mark the seasons, and their change,  
 Winter, and spring odorous with breath of flowers, 15  
 And summer with its plenteousness of fruits;  
 No thought but of the present, they lived on  
 From day to day improvident.<sup>57</sup>

Medwin has omitted nothing, and has often found successful English equivalents, as in 'odorous with breath of flowers' (l. 15) for ἀνθεμώδους (PV. 455), apparently attracted to the English word 'odorous' because it is similar in sound, although not in sense, to the Greek suffix -ώδους, which derives from εἶδος ('shape', 'form'). The earlier phrase, ἔφυρον εἰκῇ πάντα (PV. 450: 'they mixed all things together'), which requires some sort of rewriting in English to make its meaning clear, has in fact been replaced by a phrase that looks back to the previous dream-image in PV. 448-49. It also expresses the idea of confusion in the Greek phrase, but omits the specific image in ἔφυρον (φύρω = 'to mix paste or dough'). But although the original imagery is lost, the replacement is effective, and not unworthy of Aeschylus:

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57 Medwin's Prometheus (1832), 30-31; PV. 447-57. For translation, see Chapter 8, notes 78-79.

they beheld  
All things in the distorted mirror of  
Their vain imaginations (ll. 4-6).

In lines 9-13 he retains the 'sun-unvisited' of Aeschylus (PV. 453: ἀνηλίοις), and then inserts a comparison that does not appear in the Greek:

resembling more  
The mansions of the dead, than dwellings fit  
For man, and living beings.

This comparison was inspired by one layer of meaning in κατώρυχε (PV. 452: 'underground'), which has to do with burial, and μυχοῖς (PV. 453: 'inmost recesses'), which is sometimes applied to the inmost regions of the underworld.<sup>58</sup> It must be this association with death and burial which caused Medwin to select 'delving' as a translation for ἀήσυροι (PV. 452), a word derived from the verb ἄημι ('to blow'), and therefore probably meaning 'moved by the wind', and so 'agile' or 'busy'.<sup>59</sup>

Medwin's technique is particularly valuable for translating the lyric passages, where very close translation can often be unsatisfactory. His translation of the first stasimon (PV. 399-435), an ode composed of two pairs of stanzas in strophic responsion followed by an epode, is arranged in four stanzas headed 'Chorus', 'Strophe', 'Antistrophe' and 'Epode'. All four stanzas are linked together by their final two lines, which form a refrain emphasising the main theme of the ode — the universal sympathy of creation for Prometheus. The first stanza, which like the others is half close translation and half expanded paraphrase,

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58 See LSJ, s.v. κατώρυξ and μυχός.

59 See LSJ, s.v. ἀήσυρος, and Aeschylus, Prometheus Vincetus, ed. E.E. Sikes and St.J.B. Wynne Wilson, 105.

is both Aeschylean in tone and very effective as English verse:

Prometheus! victim of immortal hate!  
 I mourn for thee, and for thy fate.  
 And from my pity-streaming eyes,  
     To wet my cheek with an exhaustless river,  
 Do fountain-springs of tears arise, 5  
     And flow.....and still flow on for ever.....  
 The sovereign will decreed for thee  
     An evil lot, in evil hour,  
 A most funereal destiny;  
     And in the greatness of his power 10  
 Made Gods, whom he supplanted, feel  
 The keen edge of his tyrant steel:  
 I mourn for thee, and for thy fate,  
 Thou victim of immortal hate!<sup>60</sup>

In his biography of Medwin, Lovell quotes from Medwin's preface to the Prometheus and notes that Medwin has carried out in practice his belief that corresponding English phrases and idioms should be used whenever possible, but that it was most important not to obscure the meaning of his text, or make his verses 'hard, dry and inharmonious'.<sup>61</sup> He also praises Medwin's metrical skill and versatility, and illustrates his remarks with several long quotations taken from Medwin's Agamemnon, which equals the translation of the Prometheus in its strength, fire and technical virtuosity. It would be easy to take many examples illustrative of Medwin's success with the Agamemnon, but two must suffice. First, as a sample of Medwin's blank verse, Clytemnestra's triumphant description of the murder of Agamemnon:

I struck him twice, and twice he groaned aloud:  
 And as he groaned a second time, his limbs  
 Were loosened, and he fell — one more, a third  
 And last libation poured I forth, to please

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60 Medwin's Prometheus (1832), 28; PV. 399-406: 'I mourn over thee, Prometheus, by reason of thy hapless fate. Shedding from my eyes a coursing flood of tears I wet my tender cheeks with their moist streams. For Zeus, holding thus direful sway by self-appointed laws, displayeth towards the gods of old an overweening spirit.' (Weir Smyth)

61 Lovell, 268-69.



That subterranean Jove, who saves the dead, 5  
 As he above the living — then escaped  
 His spirit with a sigh...and on its breath  
 Came rushing forth a mighty shower of blood,  
 That sprinkled him all o'er with its black dew, 10  
 Making me glad as a field newly sown,  
 When falls the divine rain, and wakes to life  
 The flowers.

Illustrious Argives! may it please you  
 To hail with joy this act, that is my glory;  
 And were it a decorous thing to make  
 Libations o'er his corse, my hands were best. 15  
 Suffice it, he at last has rightly drained  
 That execrable chalice, which he filled  
 To overflowing with a sea of evils.<sup>62</sup>

The cold triumph of Clytemnestra is everywhere present. The translation is accurate (except in line 9, where Medwin sprinkles the blood on Agamemnon, not on Clytemnestra, as the  $\mu'$  in Ag. 1390 requires),<sup>63</sup> and keeps both the meaning and the strength of the original speech.

The same qualities of translation technique can be seen in this passage from the parodos:

But we who stay at home; heavy with years  
 Who to the earth inglorious bend,  
 Our sole support is a stout staff, to rest  
 On which our out-worn frame,  
 Weak as some child's, for on the tender breast, 5  
 As in the old, the sap's the same,  
 No martial spirit flows;  
 For poor weak miserable man,  
 When on his vital trunk grow sere  
 The leaves, is little better here 10  
 Than a second infant, and he goes  
 Crawling and tottering underneath his load,  
 Upon three feet along a weary road,  
 And roams about, about, and seems  
 As spectral, marrowless and wan, 15  
 As day-appearing ghosts in dreams.<sup>64</sup>

There is some awkwardness in the opening lines of this passage,

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62 Medwin's Agamemnon, 65-66; Ag. 1384-98. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 118.

63 But see p. 369 below and note 81.

64 Medwin's Agamemnon, 6; Ag. 72-82. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 119.



due to the punctuation rather than the wording itself,<sup>65</sup> but the main point of interest is in the adjectives Medwin has added to the translation. Medwin has realised that the main point in these lines is the contrast between weakness and strength, dry age and sap-filled youth, and this awareness has guided his choice of such words as 'stout' (l. 3), 'out-worn' (l. 4), 'poor weak miserable' (l. 8), 'vital' (l. 9) and 'spectral, marrowless and wan' (l. 15). Medwin's ability to make judicious additions and substitutions in order to convey an effect similar to that of the original text is the quality above all others that puts him in a category apart from most of his contemporary translators. When compared with Morehead's translations from the Agamemnon, discussed and quoted from in Chapter 8, Medwin's versions are more successful, because he sustains the combination of closeness with Aeschylean tone and imagery with more apparent ease and less frequent escape into unnecessarily free paraphrase. When the two passages quoted above from Medwin's Agamemnon are compared with Morehead's versions, it can be seen that the speech of Clytemnestra is done equally well by both men, but that Medwin's passage from the parodos has more of the true Aeschylean tone.

At about the same time as his two translations were published, Medwin was introduced to Dilke, the editor of the Athenaeum, by the poet Robert Montgomery, who wrote, 'Do not judge Medwin by the Conversations — they were a three-weeks' child — he is a fine enthusiast, an accomplished scholar',<sup>66</sup> and recommended to Dilke an article which Medwin had written on Aeschylus. Such an essay

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65 See p.369 below and note 81.

66 Lovell, 264-65.

was published in the Athenaeum on 19 May 1832, and is probably the article concerned.<sup>67</sup> The article itself cannot lay any great claim to scholarship, since its main concern is to deplore the neglect of Aeschylus until fairly recently, to criticise the translation of Potter, 'who has blindly followed his blind guide Pauw', and thus not done the Greek poet justice, and to give some illustrative passages from the Agamemnon in translation. The translation is Medwin's, and the passages chosen are mostly those which illustrate the character of Clytemnestra and the visions of Cassandra.

Medwin must have been delighted to be given such a chance to advertise his work; he must have been equally delighted with the glowing reviews his work received in the Athenaeum and elsewhere. The Athenaeum had some reservations about Medwin's Prometheus, acknowledging Medwin's accuracy and poetic power, but feeling the want of 'the vitality, the soul-searching energy, the superhuman vigour of the Greek';<sup>68</sup> but congratulated Medwin on his fine version of the Agamemnon, 'almost worthy of being compared with the sublime original'.<sup>69</sup> All the other reviews agreed with this pronouncement, except the British Critic, which attacked Medwin's translation of the opening lines of the Agamemnon and implied that if they were unsatisfactory, nothing further needed to be said about the remainder of Medwin's translations.<sup>70</sup>

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67 Ath. v (1832), 320-21. Certainty about the author is impossible, as the marked file of the Athenaeum for 1832 is missing. See Lovell, 265.

68 Ath. v (1832), 301-02.

69 Ath. v (1832), 363.

70 BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 379-80. For the other reviews, see Appendix 4, Section A.

The good reviews and the comparatively cheap price of three shillings and sixpence for the Prometheus and five shillings for the Agamemnon probably boosted sales of the translations and helped to persuade James Fraser to accept Medwin's other translations for his magazine. As mentioned above, Medwin may not have translated more than the Prometheus and Agamemnon before returning to England, but at the time of their publication he was certainly hoping to follow them with translations of the remaining five plays.<sup>71</sup> The lapse of time between the four plays published in Fraser's Magazine over the next two years is in keeping with the suggestion that these translations were executed after the success of the two published plays was secure. The Choephoroe appeared in Fraser's in November 1832, the Persians in January 1833, the Seven before Thebes in April 1833, and the Eumenides in May 1834.<sup>72</sup> The Eumenides was probably delayed because Medwin was working on various other literary projects in 1833, and also suffered several bouts of ill-health.<sup>73</sup>

The translation of the Choephoroe shows much the same qualities as Medwin's first two translations. Medwin's variety of style and tone is well illustrated from his translation of the nurse's speech, which has often been likened to that of another nurse in Romeo and Juliet. Medwin's version of her garrulous reminiscence has all the ease of colloquial speech:

but Orestes —  
My Orestes — my own sweet love — my darling,

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71 The reviews in GM, cii<sup>1</sup> (1832), 532-34, and Met, v (1832), 56, refer to such a plan.

72 See Appendix 1, Section C.

73 Lovell, 275-78.

That I took from his mother, that I nursed  
 Myself — ah! woe's the hour! Often and often  
 I took him up, and dandled him night after night, 5  
 Wandering about the house with him, up and down,  
 And quieted his piercing cries: poor dear!  
 Many and many disagreeables  
 I've had to suffer, as I could, for thee.  
 A child, ere reason comes, is like a lamb, 10  
 And needs, in all his humours, looking after.  
 The baby in the cradle is for ever  
 A-hungry, or a-thirsty, or has wants  
 A puling thing in arms can never tell:  
 The stomachs of helpless infants give no warnings. 15  
 I frequently could guess what he'd be doing;  
 But many a time and oft have I been cheated,  
 And had to clean his linen — two in one,  
 His nurse and washer-woman.<sup>74</sup>

The only time Medwin departs from his technique of close but idiomatic translation is in his treatment of Cho. 751,

καὶ νυκτιπλάγκτων ὀρθίων κελευμάτων

('because of his shrill cries that roused me from my bed'), which he translates and explains in an expanded paraphrase in lines 4-7. He has been particularly successful with νυκτιπλάγκτων, literally 'wandering by night', which suggested to him the picture of the nurse walking the floor with a howling infant in her arms.

The translations of the Persae and Septem require a more formalised style in the dialogue and great metrical variety in the treatment of the choral passages. Medwin again proves himself

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74 FM, vi (1832), 527; Cho. 749-62: 'But my beloved Orestes, on whom I spent my soul, whom I took from his mother at his birth and nursed, and the many and troublesome tasks — fruitless for all my enduring them — when his loud and urgent cries broke my rest. For the senseless thing one must nurse like a dumb beast — of course one must — by following its humour. For while it is still a babe in swaddling clothes, it has no speech at all — whether it be that hunger moves it, or thirst belike, or call of need — children's young inwards work their own relief. These needs I would forecast; yet many a time, I trow, mistaken, having to wash the child's linen — laundress and nurse had the same office. 'Twas I who, with these two handicrafts, received Orestes at his father's hands.' (Weir Smyth)



equal to the task:

Sacrilege like this  
 Fit punishment awaits, and must await.  
 Nor is the measure of their woes complete;  
 But ills shall gender other ills to them.  
 Beneath the Doric lance, Platea's plains 5  
 Shall be a sea of blood; and heaps of bones,  
 To the third generation, with their silence  
 Shall shew mankind this truth — Too much ambition  
 Is little fit for mortal. Arrogance  
 Upon its flowering stalk bears crimes, whence reap'd 10  
 A piteous crop of tears: looking to which,  
 And to this heavy retribution, keep  
 For ever in your minds Athens and Greece.  
 Let no one, thankless for his present fortune,  
 Covet another's, losing that he has. 15  
 There is a power rules all things from on high;  
 Jove knows the hidden thoughts of men, and frustrates  
 The imaginations of proud hearts.<sup>75</sup>

A comparison of this version with the even more literal translation of Palin in Chapter 9 makes quite clear Medwin's successful blend of accuracy with sonorous formal English. His handling of the harvest metaphor in lines 9-11 (Pers. 821-22) deserves special praise.

The lyric passages in Medwin's Persians also deserve some attention. He shows a fine command of the varied possibilities of English rhyme and rhythm, and despite the problems of choric responsion which his chosen form constantly brings upon him, he is still able to keep up his technique of close idiomatic translation, with occasional expanded paraphrase. Here is part of his translation of the first stasimon, lamenting the loss of the Persian fleet:

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75 FM, vii (1833), 36-37; Pers. 813-28. Pers. 813-17: 'Wherefore having evil wrought, evil they suffer in no less measure; and other evils are still in store: not yet quenched is the spring of their woes, but it still wells forth. For so great shall be the mass of clotted gore spilled by the Dorian lance upon Plataean soil that heaps of dead shall make known. . . .' (Weir Smyth) For translation of Pers. 818-28, see Chapter 9, note 103.



Some wrestling with the sea and spray,  
 Were among eddying whirlpools suck'd and drown'd,  
 To ocean's offspring mute a prey.

What accents drear

Are those I hear?

5

No house but mourns for husband, sire or son.

Whence was that harrowing sound?

'Twas of some frenzied wretch, some hopeless, childless  
 [one.]<sup>76</sup>

In the phrase 'ocean's offspring mute' (l. 3) he repeats almost unaltered the ἀναύδων. . . παίδων τὰς ἀμιάντου ('voiceless children of the stainless [sea]') of Pers. 577-78, where less able translators would have rewritten and explained a metaphor that may be unusual, but is still perfectly comprehensible.

Lovell suggests that the soldier in Medwin was attracted by the themes of the Persae and Septem.<sup>77</sup> This must be true, and in Medwin's Seven before Thebes his own first-hand experience of warfare seems to have enlivened his descriptions of the seven Argive heroes, and the fear-filled utterances of the Chorus. However, there is also sometimes a falling-off in the quality of the actual translation, with Medwin seemingly readier than before to resort to paraphrase, unnecessary omissions and weak additions, either through overconfidence in his powers, or through weariness at his self-imposed task. But this is a small criticism, and there is no lack of passages in which Medwin's talent is as evident as ever. His translation of the passage in which Eteocles rails at the Chorus of terrified women is one such:

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76 FM, vii (1833), 29-30; Pers. 576-83: 'Lacerated by the swirling waters (alas!) they are gnawed (alas!) by the voiceless children of the stainless sea (alas!). The home, bereaved of his presence, lamenteth its head; and parents, reft of their children, in their old age bewail their heaven-sent woes (alas!), now that they learn the full measure of their afflictions.' (Weir Smyth)

77 Lovell, 265-66.

Race not to be endured! and is it thus  
 You think to save the city? Answer! say,  
 If kneeling at these shrines, and wails, and tears,  
 Can drive the assailants from our gates, or breathe  
 Courage into the hearts of the besieged? 5  
 Thou sex! aversion of the wise, in good  
 Or evil fortune may I ever shun  
 Thy converse — all endangering, when in power,  
 By pride and insolence; in times of gloom  
 A greater mischief still, confounding then 10  
 With craven fear: as now, with tottering steps,  
 And flying to and fro, not knowing where,  
 You panic-strike my men, and make ourselves  
 Our greatest foes, abetting those without,  
 Till all things smile on them. This comes of thee, 15  
 Woman! of fellowship with thee! . . Now hear!  
 Mark my decree, which if old or young,  
 Or man or woman, dare to violate,  
 They shall be judged by ballot, — stoned to death.  
 Arms and the Forum, these by right are ours — 20  
 No female province. Hence, then! go within,  
 Where you can spread no mischief. Do you hear?  
 Or hear you not, or are my words but breath?<sup>78</sup>

With the minimum of rewriting, Medwin has turned the Greek into  
 good idiomatic English. As usual he retains Aeschylean phrases  
 when he thinks it possible: *σωφρόνων μισήματα* (Sept. 186: 'things  
 hated by decent people') becomes 'aversion of the wise' (l. 6);  
 and in his rearrangement of Sept. 191-92 he includes the

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78 FM, vii (1833), 440-41; Sept. 181-202: 'You, I ask,  
 insufferable creatures that ye are! is this the best course  
 to save the town, does this hearten our beleaguered soldiery —  
 to fling yourselves before the images of the gods that guard  
 the city and shout and shriek and make decent folk detest you?  
 Neither in evil days nor in gladsome prosperity may I have to  
 house with womankind. Has she the upper hand, — 'tis  
 insolence past living with; but, if seized with fear, to home  
 and city she is a still greater bane. So now, by thus hurrying  
 to and fro in flight, in your clamour ye have spread craven  
 cowardice among the townsfolk. The fortunes of the foe without  
 are thus aided best, while we are ruined from within by your  
 own selves. Verily you may expect such troubles if you house  
 with womenkind. Now if there be one who shall refuse obedience  
 to my authority — man or woman or whatsoever is betwixt —  
 sentence of death shall be passed upon him, and he shall in no  
 wise escape destruction by stoning at the people's hand.  
 Matters abroad are man's affair — let woman not advise thereon.  
 Bide thou within and stir up no mischief. Dost hear or not?  
 Or am I speaking to the deaf?' (Weir Smyth)

Aeschylean 'you panic-strike my men' (l. 13). On the other hand there is no good reason for adding 'Till all things smile on them' (l. 15), which is certainly not implicit in the Greek, and the phrase 'if old or young' (l. 17) is a prudish replacement for  $\chi\omega\tau\iota\ \tau\omega\nu\ \mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\acute{\iota}\chi\mu\iota\omicron\nu$  (Sept. 197: 'and whatever is in between [man and woman]), which surely is an idea that must be kept to underline Eteocles' complaint that the frightened women are unmanning his soldiers.

In the translation of the Eumenides, which was probably written under pressure, the same loss of quality is also to be seen. The dialogue is usually well done, in Medwin's characteristic manner; but the speeches of the Chorus, especially in lyric passages, are more freely interpreted. Because he was working under pressure, and was in indifferent health, Medwin may have been readier than before to paraphrase, a method which was easier and quicker than his usual technique. The re-entry of the Chorus, at the temple of Athene in Athens, illustrates Medwin's reliance on paraphrase:

First Fury. Look! his step! his foot!

It bears the mark and impress of the man,  
And rises like a voice from out the ground,  
Proclaiming, "He goes there!" As hounds some hind  
Fast bleeding to the death, we track him thus,  
And our sides pant with the long toilsome chase;  
For we have left no spot on earth untrod,  
And many a sea, unroared by wings, have crossed,  
Nothing behind a vessel in our speed.  
And now I scent him somewhere hereabouts;  
For the hot steam of human blood sends up  
A pleasant savour to make glad my nostrils,  
As laughter does the heart.

5

10

A Fury.

Look, sisters! look!

Semichorus. Scent him here, and scent him there;  
Hunt him, chase him every where.

15

Semichorus. Vengeance tracks where'er may hide  
The fugitive and matricide.

Semichorus. Toil-spent, yon statue clasping, see! he stands:

It cannot wash the crimson from his hands.

Semichorus. 'Tis here — his mother's blood has sunk below; 20  
No vital tide can in her heart reflow.

First Fury. But in repayment thou shalt give thine own;  
I from thy limbs will, drop by drop, drain dry  
The purple stream, and quench my burning thirst  
With the salt draught.<sup>79</sup>

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Again there is the Aeschylean touch in 'unoared by wings' (l. 8), translating ἀπτέροις ποτήμασιν (Eum. 250: 'in wingless flight'), and in line 6, which translates

πολλοῖς δὲ μόχθοις ἀνδροκμήσι φουσιᾶ  
επλάγχνον

(Eum. 248-49: 'my heart pants at my many wearisome labours').

However, apart from lines 4-10, which closely translate Eum. 247-52, the passage is a paraphrase, expanding or abbreviating the Greek so as to retain the tone and basic ideas, but at the sacrifice of much of the precise sense. There is no doubt that the result is a most effective and dramatic passage of English verse, but Medwin is coming dangerously close to the dividing line between translation and imitation. This process was of course begun when Medwin revised his Siena (1827) translation of

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79 FM, ix (1834), 558-59; Eum. 245-66: 'Aha! Here is the trail of the man, and plain! Follow the evidence of a voiceless informant. For as a hound a wounded fawn, so do we track him by the drops of blood. My heart pants at my sore and wearying toil; for I have ranged over every region of the earth, and in wingless flight I came in pursuit of him over the sea, swift as a swift ship. So now, somewhere hereabout he must be crouching. The smell of human blood makes me laugh for joy. Look! Look again! Scan every spot lest unawares the slayer of his mother escape by secret flight and pay not his debt! Aye, here he is again! In shelter, his arms twined round the image of the immortal goddess, he is fain to submit to trial for his debt! But that may not be. A mother's blood upon the earth is past recovery; alack, the flowing stream once spilled upon the ground is lost and gone! Nay, thou art bound in requital to suffer that I suck the ruddy clouts of gore from thy living limbs. May I feed myself on thee — a gruesome draught!' (Weir Smyth)



Prometheus for republication in 1832, and it is perhaps inevitable in a translator of some poetic talent with sufficient insight to appreciate, absorb and reproduce much of the poetic power of his chosen author.

Medwin's Prometheus and Agamemnon were reprinted in Fraser's Magazine in August 1837 and November 1838 respectively, in a slightly revised form.<sup>80</sup> Some of the changes were simply corrections of errors or misprints, or improvements in the punctuation;<sup>81</sup> others were minor changes in the wording. These reprints may have been prompted by the rivalry of Fraser's with Blackwood's, which was at that time printing Chapman's translations of Greek tragedy,<sup>82</sup> but in the absence of the archives of Fraser's Magazine,<sup>83</sup> it is not possible to say much about Medwin's relationship with Fraser. Medwin's gratitude to the publisher shines out in a reference to Fraser in his Life of Shelley. He describes Fraser as having, 'with a liberality that is unique at the present day, ever stood forward to do justice to the merits of contemporary authors'.<sup>84</sup> Even so, these translations can hardly have made Medwin's fortune.<sup>85</sup>

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80 See Appendix 1, Section C.

81 For example, the misprint in the Agamemnon noted on p. 359 above, is corrected so that the text now reads 'That sprinkled me all o'er' (FM, xviii (1838), 534); and the punctuation of the passage from the parodos of the Agamemnon, also on p. 359, has been amended so that the lines read more easily and more coherently (FM, xviii (1838), 506-07).

82 See pp. 388-96 below.

83 Miriam Thrall, Rebellious Fraser's, viii, states that the archives no longer exist.

84 Medwin, Life of Shelley, 142.

85 See Lovell, 275. On at least four occasions Medwin begged free theatre tickets from Macready, which a more affluent man would not have had to do.



In about 1838 Medwin went to live in Germany, taking with him a set of the first ten volumes of Fraser's Magazine (1830-1834), his hope being, apparently, that he might one day publish his translations from Aeschylus in book form.<sup>86</sup> He eventually returned to England in 1861, but nothing further is heard of his translations. There is no indication that he ever began a translation of the Supplices, the one play of Aeschylus that he had not tackled. At some time, probably after 1861, he translated the Frogs, and sent a copy to Shelley's son along with a rather pompous letter of self-flattery, but this translation is no longer extant.<sup>87</sup> Medwin died on 2 August 1869 and was buried at Horsham, his native town.

Lovell examines the possible reasons why Medwin chose to translate Aeschylus. For one thing, it was a way of paying homage to Shelley's ghost, and at the same time an escape from the pain of his broken marriage and his poverty. Aeschylus, 'the soldier-poet', would appeal to another military man. The formlessness of Medwin's own poetry would be stiffened by the genius of Aeschylus. And the themes of the plays would also strike a sympathetic chord in their translator. Finally, the work of translation was eminently a task for a poet and scholar, to both of which titles Medwin aspired.<sup>88</sup> Lovell's assessment is accurate. The obvious fact that a new translation of Aeschylus was essential, in view of contemporary interest in Greek tragedy, must have been the final piece of encouragement for Medwin. The need to forget his worries

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86 Lovell, 287.

87 Lovell, 329.

88 Lovell, 265-66.

by filling his mind with the problems of translation might have set him to work, but he would never have gone beyond his first two translations if there had been no ready market available. It may be that his planned publication of a complete translation of Aeschylus was never achieved because, by the 1840s, the market was no longer there.

This pursuit of Medwin and his translations has gone some way ahead, and it is time to return to 1833, in which year, apart from Medwin's Persians and Seven before Thebes, one other new translation was published. This was Elizabeth Barrett's first translation of the Prometheus, which was written during a period of much personal distress. In 1831 her father was in financial trouble and was planning to sell the family home at Hope End in Herefordshire where she had lived all her life. The expected loss of Hope End would also entail the rupture of her friendship with Hugh Stuart Boyd, who had become a close and influential friend since their first meeting in 1828, and who had encouraged her study of Greek literature.<sup>89</sup> She had already read a little Greek tragedy, but Boyd was responsible for introducing her to Aeschylus,<sup>90</sup> and for helping to improve her previously haphazard understanding of Greek syntax.<sup>91</sup> In return, she read him his favourite Greek authors. However, by the early summer of 1831 relations between the two had become strained, and Elizabeth Barrett sought relief from her general unhappiness by beginning a

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89 The best account of their friendship is given by Barbara McCarthy in the introduction to her edition of the letters of Elizabeth Barrett to Boyd (EBB/HSB, xiv-xxxix).

90 EBB/HSB, 5-6, 18-19.

91 EBB/HSB, 19, 80.

diary, which has only comparatively recently been discovered and published.<sup>92</sup> Many of the entries are full of her fears that Boyd's feelings for her have cooled, and that when the Barrett family leaves Hope End, their friendship will not survive the separation.<sup>93</sup>

Meantime she continued to visit him. In June and July of 1831 they were reading the Septem together, but this was abandoned because Boyd was unfamiliar with the play.<sup>94</sup> Instead, Elizabeth Barrett read to him from the Greek Christian Fathers and helped him to memorise Greek poetry. This particular hobby was a great comfort to the blind man, who had memorised the massive total of 8000 lines of Greek verse by 1832.<sup>95</sup> He was particularly fond of the Prometheus, and on many occasions Elizabeth Barrett records having either helped him to memorise or listened to him reciting passages from this play.<sup>96</sup> Miss Barrett also read a great deal of Greek on her own, most — possibly all — of which she recorded in her diary, and which includes a wide range of prose and verse authors. In her diary entry for 30 March 1832 she noted that she had by that date read 'every play of Aeschylus, Sophocles, & Euripides',<sup>97</sup> which would have been no mean achievement for anyone, let alone a young woman of twenty-six. In later years she was to be very critical of what she looked back on as omnivorous and

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92 Diary by E.B.B. The Unpublished Diary of Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, 1831-1832, ed. Philip Kelley and Ronald Hudson. (Referred to throughout as Diary.)

93 For example, Diary, 13.

94 Diary, 10, 15, 17, 31-33, 90-91.

95 Diary, 240; EBB/HSB, 164, 164n<sup>1</sup>.

96 Diary, 53, 59, 91, 160, 162, 240.

97 Diary, 229.

unselective reading,<sup>98</sup> but in 1831-1832 most of this reading was being done to escape the unhappiness and uncertainty that was tormenting her.

Her translation of the Prometheus was undertaken for very similar reasons. It was one of her favourite plays, probably because of its association in her mind with Boyd. 'I quite love the Prometheus,' she told her diary on 16 August 1831. 'It is an exquisite creation: & besides, — I was so happy when I read the first scenes of that play!'<sup>99</sup> She had, earlier in her life, made several translations,<sup>100</sup> but seems to have had no great opinion of her ability in that field, telling Boyd in 1829 that 'no one can succeed at translation, without having the talent for it and the habit of it, neither of which I have.'<sup>101</sup> In 1831-1832 Boyd was working on his own translations of Gregory of Nazianzen.<sup>102</sup> Inevitably the subject of translation came up in their conversations at this time, and on 15 November Elizabeth Barrett wrote in her diary that a few days earlier Boyd had 'proposed me to translate the two orations [of Gregory] against Julian — & to translate the Prometheus into blank verse. I begged him to do it, instead of me; & there the entreaties dropped!'<sup>103</sup> The matter may have been overtly dropped, but this young woman's uncertainty of mind now had something specific to work on. She was unsure of Boyd's friendship. He wished her to translate. What better way of

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98 Letters of E.B. Browning to R.H. Horne, II.151-52.

99 Diary, 91.

100 Dorothy Hewlett, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 30-36.

101 EBB/HSB, 76.

102 EBB/HSB, 150n<sup>2</sup>.

103 Diary, 179-80.



winning his approval and restoring their formerly happy relationship than to accede to his wishes?

The exact date on which she sat down to begin her translation is not known because her diary for 1832 has been much mutilated by the later excision of many pages and half-pages,<sup>104</sup> but the work was well under way by the end of January. On 2 February 1832 she wrote in her diary:

Took courage & told Mr B of my translation of the Prometheus. He seemed pleased, & surprised at my having done so much, & so unparaphrastically. I asked him inconsiderately, if he wd. read it, if he wd. read some part of it! — His answer did not please me: and yet he did not say "I will not" —<sup>105</sup>

Although hurt by his apparent rebuff, she kept on with her translation, taking comfort from the strong approval of her brother Edward.<sup>106</sup> She was now so absorbed that she did little else but translate for the next week or more, sometimes even getting up before breakfast to press on with her work.<sup>107</sup> On 15 February she had finished, having taken a fortnight to translate 1975 lines, and she pronounced herself 'tolerably satisfied' with what she had done.<sup>108</sup>

During the next few days she made a fair copy of her translation and showed it to her father, who, as always, was impressed by his daughter's poetic achievement and suggested that she write to the scholar E.H. Barker to find out from him whether

104 Of a total of 144 written pages, 56 have been totally excised and 18 pages excised in part. See Diary, xxxiii.

105 Diary, 212-13.

106 Diary, 213.

107 Diary, 214.

108 Diary, 216. Years later, she told Horne that it had taken twelve days. See Letters of E.B. Browning to R.H. Horne, I. 162.



Valpy would consider publishing the translation among his classical books.<sup>109</sup> But she was unwilling to do this without consulting Boyd, and therefore wrote to him at once, asking for his opinion.<sup>110</sup> Boyd replied straight away, saying that he disliked the plan, because if her translation was 'good enough to be creditable' to her, 'it should be published separately'.<sup>111</sup> Boyd had apparently thought she was suggesting publication in Valpy's Family Classical Library, and not as a volume on his general classical list — a natural enough error, but Elizabeth Barrett was surprised and upset by what she considered to be a pretty 'cool' reply, and at once wrote to Boyd again, explaining Valpy's work and rating her own translation 'very humbly', and even saying she really wished she had never brought up the subject of publishing it at all. 'The real truth!' she added pathetically in her diary entry. 'If I never had, I never shd have been exposed to the pain which has been & is oppressing me.'<sup>112</sup> Boyd replied with a request to see a few samples of her translation; she sent them, although doubting his motives.<sup>113</sup> It is just possible that Boyd did not really want his pupil to be working on a translation of her own while he was engaged on a similar task.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth Barrett wrote a preface and gave it to

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109 Diary, 216-17. Barker had edited the Classical Journal for Valpy, and still assisted him. Elizabeth Barrett herself had known and corresponded with Barker since 1828 and had probably been introduced to him by Boyd. See Gardner B. Taplin, The Life of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 31-32.

110 EBB/HSB, 159.

111 Diary, 217.

112 Diary, 217. The entry is a little ambiguous: it may be either the translation itself or the plan to have it published that she is regretting.

113 Diary, 218.

her father, but she thought he did not much like it.<sup>114</sup> Her aunt also wrote to some friends of Hatchard, another publisher, to see if he would be interested in publishing the translation along with about thirty original poems,<sup>115</sup> but when Hatchard's reply came, it implied that he would not publish at his own expense, and this plan was taken no further.<sup>116</sup> On 5 March Elizabeth Barrett visited Boyd, who had had her specimens read to him, and now offered some praise mixed with criticism. He asked for a further specimen, but she thought he was not really interested.<sup>117</sup> Many of her diary entries at this time record that she is feeling wretched, ill and tired. The spoiled hopes she had had for her translation made her feel worse than ever, and the work that had pleased her when it was first done now began to dissatisfy her.<sup>118</sup> At this low point, she was encouraged by signs of greater interest from Boyd,<sup>119</sup> but his earlier indifference seems to have left its mark, for in a letter of ?April 1832 she ventured to criticise a blank verse translation which Boyd had done because it was not a suitable metre for translating lyric verse.<sup>120</sup>

Here the diary ends. At the end of May 1832 the Boyds moved to Bathampton, near Bath; while the Barretts left Hope End after it was sold in July and settled in Sidmouth. Now that the two dreaded events had come and gone, Elizabeth Barrett began to

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114 Diary, 219.

115 Diary, 221.

116 Diary, 223, 230.

117 Diary, 222.

118 Diary, 226-27.

119 Diary, 229, 239.

120 EBB/HSB, 159.

recover her health and spirits, and resumed work on the preface and notes for her Prometheus. These were finished by mid-December 1832,<sup>121</sup> at which time Boyd came to Sidmouth, reluctantly followed by his unfortunate wife in the following spring. In some way, the separation had ended Miss Barrett's emotional dependance on Boyd. Although she continued to be fond of him, she began to see him for what he was — 'a rather testy pedant'<sup>122</sup> — and when he left Sidmouth she was not heartbroken. She continued to correspond with him and visit him, but his influence on her writing was never so strong again as it had been in early 1832.<sup>123</sup>

Still hoping to have her translation published, Elizabeth Barrett was a little disconcerted by the publication of Medwin's Prometheus in 1832, but she told a friend that her father was going to get in touch with Valpy.<sup>124</sup> This was in December 1832; Valpy published the translation anonymously in the spring of 1833.<sup>125</sup> The preface to the translation glows with its author's love and enthusiasm for Aeschylus, and for the Prometheus in particular.<sup>126</sup> Of her approach to translation she has little to say, stating only that she used blank verse as the 'nearest parallel' to the Greek iambics, and irregular rhymed lines for the choral odes and lyric passages in an attempt to convey a similar

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121 Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.16.

122 The description is that of McCarthy, EBB/HSB, xxx.

123 See EBB/HSB, xxx-xxxviii, for an account of the remaining years of their friendship. Boyd was the only one of her friends to know the secret of her planned marriage to Robert Browning.

124 Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.16.

125 On 27 May 1833 Elizabeth Barrett told Mrs Martin that it had been published 'a fortnight ago' (Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.21).

126 See especially Barrett's Prometheus, x-xi.

effect, and has tried to make as literal a translation as poetry allowed.<sup>127</sup>

The translation itself, for all its closeness, suffers from the circumstances in which it was written, and from the immaturity and sex of its composer.

In the olden time,  
Men seeing, saw in vain, and did not hear  
Hearing; but similar to shades of dreams,  
Long mingled all things in confusedness;  
Nor knew by tilèd roofs t' oppose the sun, 5  
Nor knew device of wood; but underground,  
Abode like sorry ants in sunless caves.  
To them, of winter shone no certain sign,  
Nor yet of flow'ry spring, nor fruitful summer;  
But all things did they void of sapiency.<sup>128</sup> 10

The technique of this passage is typical. The only departure from literalness is the omission of *μυχόις* (PV. 453: 'recesses') and the questionable translation of *ἄγχοροι* (PV. 452) as 'sorry' (1. 7).<sup>129</sup> But the translation reads like a mechanical and lifeless exercise. The lyric passages are even less satisfactory. Elizabeth Barrett's powers of versification were too light and feminine to cope with the fiery power of Aeschylus, despite her admiration of it:

I mourn thy ruin'd destinies,  
Prometheus! From my tender eyes  
A tear-distilling stream doth break,  
With humid fount to dew my cheek;  
Because Saturnius, cruel still, 5  
Ruling by his proper will,  
Doth the royal sceptre bear,  
Subversive of the gods who were.<sup>130</sup>

It was probably metrical exigency that caused the transfer of

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127 Barrett's *Prometheus*, xx.

128 Barrett's *Prometheus*, 29; PV. 447-57. For translation, see Chapter 8, notes 78-79.

129 See note 59 above.

130 Barrett's *Prometheus*, 25-26; PV. 399-406. For translation, see note 60 above.



'tender' (l. 2) from 'cheek' (l. 4) to 'eyes', as well as the appallingly feeble paraphrase in lines 6-8 and the 'destinies'/'eyes' rhyme in lines 3-4.

The reviews, such as they were, were not encouraging. The Gentleman's Magazine dispensed its customary and meaningless praise, sugared with some nauseating compliments to young ladies who can read Greek.<sup>131</sup> The Athenaeum, as usual, was honest, curtly dismissing the book in half-a-dozen lines, ending with advice for 'those who adventure in the hazardous lists of poetic translation, to touch any one rather than Aeschylus; and they may take warning by the author before us'.<sup>132</sup> The only other review did not appear until 1840, when H.N. Coleridge included the Prometheus Bound volume as one of nine books reviewed in his article 'Modern English Poetesses' for the Quarterly Review.<sup>133</sup> He wrote perceptively of the way in which 'her early enthusiasm for Aeschylus' had exaggerated her natural 'tendency to the overstrained and violent', and had made impossible any proper 'discipline of art and sense of beauty' which might have come if she had chosen Sophocles as her subject. Although admitting that her translation was 'a remarkable performance for a young lady', he judged it to be an unsatisfactory translation: 'It is too frequently uncouth, without being faithful, and, under a pile of sounding words, lets the fire go out'.

Elizabeth Barrett herself regretted having published the translation almost at once. 'I dare say I shall wish it out of

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131 GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 610-11.

132 Ath, vi (1833), 362.

133 QR, lxvi (1840), 382-89.



the light before I have done with it', she wrote to her friend Mrs Martin on 27 May 1833.<sup>134</sup> Another letter of 19 August 1833 showed her 'resolute to work whatever little faculty I have, clear of imitations and conventionalisms'.<sup>135</sup> Future references to the translation are without exception disparaging of a work she thought should have been thrown into the fire after it was done, 'the only means of giving it a little warmth'.<sup>136</sup> Much to her relief, her father acquired all the unsold copies and locked them up in his wardrobe, where they lay 'entombed as safely as Oedipus among the olives'.<sup>137</sup> The unrelieved badness of her translation still rankled, though, and she was eventually to exorcise its ghost by rewriting it years later. In one of her earliest letters to Robert Browning she told him of her translation, which had been her 'nightmare & daymare too', and said that she had resolved to rewrite the whole translation as a kind of penance, and had now virtually completed it.<sup>138</sup> On 23 May 1845 she told Browning, 'the Prometheus is done', and asked him to read and comment on it.<sup>139</sup> She considered having it published in a magazine,<sup>140</sup> but it was

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134 Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.21.

135 Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.56.

136 Letters of E.B. Browning to R.H. Horne, I.162. See also Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.57, 135, 188.

137 Letters of E.B. Browning to R.H. Horne, I.164. See also The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, 1845-1846, ed. Elvan Kintner, I.30.

138 Letters of R. Browning and E.B. Barrett, I.30. Compare also a letter to Boyd, Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.244.

139 Letters of R. Browning and E.B. Barrett, I.73, 85, 88n<sup>1</sup>, 89, 136, 138.

140 Letters of E.B. Browning, ed. Kenyon, I.244; Letters of R. Browning and E.B. Barrett, I.30.

rejected by Blackwood's<sup>141</sup> and was first published in the 1850 edition of her poems.

It is not within the scope of this thesis to consider translations written after 1840, but a brief sample of the 1850 version will show that Elizabeth Barrett really did write a completely different translation of the Prometheus:

How, first beholding, they beheld in vain,  
And hearing, heard not, but like shapes in dreams,  
Mixed all things wildly down the tedious time,  
Nor knew to build a house against the sun  
With wicketed sides, nor any woodcraft knew,  
But lived, like silly ants, beneath the ground  
In hollow caves unsunned.<sup>142</sup>

This has more life than the earlier translation, but it is the characteristic spirit of Elizabeth Barrett Browning herself, not of Aeschylus, and although it is good enough as English poetry, it is not a truly satisfactory translation.

The only translation published in 1834 was Medwin's Eumenides. In the following year there appeared a small volume containing translations of the Prometheus and Sophocles' Electra by George Croker Fox (1785-1850), the most obscure of all the known translators of Greek tragedy in the entire period. He was born on 15 January 1785 at Grove Hill, Falmouth, into a Cornish family which owned the first iron works of any size in Cornwall, and which had a reputation for liberality and hard work. Fox does not appear to have attended any British university, and presumably acquired his classical education privately — unless he was

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141 Letters of R. Browning and E.B. Barrett, II.990. See also Taplin, Life of E.B. Browning, 230-32, 238.

142 The Poetical Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (Oxford Standard Authors edition), 148-49; PV. 447-53. Compare the earlier translation on p. 378 above.

entirely self-taught. He was a magistrate of the County of Cornwall and a Fellow of the Geological Society. He died at Grove Hill on 1 July 1850.<sup>143</sup>

Why he chose to translate Greek tragedy is unknown. He says in his preface that he would never have published these translations had he not been encouraged to do so by 'a friend accomplished in the higher classics', but he seems to imply that he is not entirely dissatisfied with the translations himself.<sup>144</sup> Of his actual method of translation, Fox says that he has not tried to imitate the metre of Greek choral lyric, but has adopted whatever metre he thought made it easiest for him 'in conveying the sense, and giving force to the epithets of the dramatist'.<sup>145</sup>

Neither translation is particularly memorable. The Prometheus is in blank verse for the dialogue and rhymed lines of varying length for the lyric passages. The translation of the speech of Prometheus delivered before the arrival of the Chorus, which contains both iambic trimeters and lyric metres in the Greek, illustrates how Fox translated both into much the same sort of limping schoolboy verse, the only noticeable difference between the lyric and non-lyric passages being the rhyming lines used for the former:

Ether divine, and ye swift-winged blasts,  
Ye river-fountains, and thou ceaseless laughter  
Of Ocean's billowy flood, Earth, general parent,  
And thou, th' all-seeing orb of Sol — I call ye!  
Behold what evil by the gods inflicted,  
What contumely, what degrading woe,  
A god, like them, I suffer! Look on me!

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143 GM, n.s., xxxiv<sup>1</sup> (1850), 662. Burke's Landed Gentry, 18th edition, III.346-47.

144 Fox, Prometheus and Electra, v-vi.

145 Fox, Prometheus and Electra, vi.

Through many an age endurance I must know,  
 For heaven's new chief hath framed these bonds unworthy.  
 Alas! th' existent evil, and no less 10  
 The future mischief, burdens me. I sigh  
 For both. — What prospect have I of redress?  
 When will the end of this my woe draw nigh? 146

In the first four lines Fox gives an almost too literal translation of PV. 88-92, although he strains to make it poetic by translating κυμάτων (PV. 89: 'waves') by 'billowy flood' (l. 3) and seems to think his literal translations 'general parent' in line 3 (PV. 90: παμμῆτορ) and 'all-seeing orb of Sol' in line 4 (PV. 91: τὸν πανόπτην κύκλον ἡλίου) are fine poetry. He also seems to believe that blank verse is produced simply by slicing up prose into suitable lengths. When he comes to the lyric lines (ll. 5-13 = PV. 93-100), he introduces a rhyme on alternating lines, and at once feels the need to rearrange the ideas of the Greek and to add a few ill-chosen words of his own to make rhyming possible. This is the only explanation for the importation of 'unworthy' (l. 9), 'no less' (l. 10) and 'I sigh' (l. 11). The result is a tasteless piece of doggerel fit only for the waste-paper basket. The passage cited is far from the worst in Fox's Prometheus, but it would be unkind to the author to quote any more.

For his translation of the Electra, Fox has used rhyming couplets for the dialogue and short rhyming lines for the lyrics — a thoughtful provision, since it would not otherwise be possible to tell when dialogue ended and lyric passages began. As before, Fox slices up prose, adds a handful of poetic words, syntactical inversions and rhymes, and thinks his hotch-potch is poetry:

Memorial of our dearest hope and pride,

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146 Fox, Prometheus and Electra, 11; PV. 88-100. For translation, see note 55 above.



Of thy great form does only this remain?  
 Does thus Orestes meet his friends again!  
 What different hopes dared my fond mind conceive,  
 From those with which I now his bones receive!  
 I sent thee from our palace young and fair,  
 Now in these hands thy nothingness I bear!  
 Oh! had I died, ere to prolong thy life,  
 My care preserved thee from the murderer's knife;  
 Sending thee far in foreign lands to roam,  
 When rescued from the menaced fate at home:  
 Then hadst thou perished on the day when died  
 Thy mighty sire, and slumbered by his side!<sup>147</sup>

This at least is reasonably close to the sentiments of the original, although there is more paraphrase than in the blank verse portions of Fox's Prometheus. The same cannot be said of the lyric passages, which often expand into a sentimentalised caricature of Sophocles. One of the better choral odes is the short third stasimon, which begins with this stanza:

Regard where Mars leads on,  
 The blood of slaughter breathing!  
 And through yon gates are gone,  
 The deadliest crimes still seeking,  
 Fate's dogs inevitable;  
 Therefore, dispelling doubt,  
 My mind will soon be able  
 To trace its vision out.<sup>148</sup>

The hell-hounds of Sophocles have been reduced to poodles.

The only review of this volume appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine, with a note of disapproval just discernible beneath the usual bland surface of the reviews in this magazine. The reviewer takes exception to such phrases in the Prometheus as 'thy flood cognominal' and 'Vociferating there his embassy, to ears prepared hath Hermes preached', but otherwise thought the Prometheus had 'much poetical merit'. He was surprised to find the Electra better

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147 Fox, Prometheus and Electra, 174; El. 1126-35. For translation, see Chapter 8, notes 22-23.

148 Fox, Prometheus and Electra, 189-90; El. 1384-90. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 138.



than he had expected — which does not say much for it.<sup>149</sup>

Fox was not deterred by the lack of interest in this first book. In 1839 he published a volume of poetry, entitled The Death of Demosthenes and Other Original Poems, which included a slightly revised version of his Prometheus and a new translation of the Agamemnon. With the most breath-taking effrontery, Fox claimed that his Prometheus had 'received the commendation of many eminent scholars' and quoted a certain Professor Westermann of Leipzig who had been so misguided as to say of it, 'Intellexi ad Aeschyli gravitatem atque majestatem proxime auctorem accessisse.'<sup>150</sup> The alterations do not amount to more than a few changed words and half-lines and many minor changes in punctuation, and certainly do not make Fox's Prometheus worth a second inspection. The other play, the Agamemnon, had not been published before, and its author is just as impressed with this achievement as with his previous translations, thinking that by dispensing altogether with rhymes, and by imitating Greek lyric metre as closely as he could, he has written a translation full of 'freedom, truth, [and] energy'.<sup>151</sup>

As before, Fox's blank verse consists of sliced-up prose. He has, as he says, dispensed with rhyme in the lyric passages, which has thus made it possible for him to use sliced-up prose for these parts of the play also, and has certainly done nothing to improve the formlessness and lack of rhythm that bedevilled his earlier translations. It is hard to find any part of his translation worth quoting. The following passage from Cassandra's visionary

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149 GM, n.s., v (1836), 168-69.

150 Fox, Death of Demosthenes, ix.

151 Fox, Death of Demosthenes, x.

utterances is not untypical:

Ah! ah!  
Look! look! From the fierce heifer keep the bull!  
Whom, hamper'd in those garments,  
With that black and horn-handl'd axe the fury strikes.  
He falls now in the liquid charger.  
To thee I speaking am of that insidious bath.<sup>152</sup>

Again, the Gentleman's Magazine pronounced that Fox had translated 'with correctness and spirit, and in a masculine and severe style',<sup>153</sup> but it was never that magazine's policy to review honestly if the truth was painful. The Athenaeum, though, had built its reputation on honest criticism, and said of Fox's Agamemnon that it was 'about the worst translation of the most frequently-translated Greek Drama'.<sup>154</sup> Fox did not publish another.

In 1836, the year following the appearance of Fox's Prometheus and Electra, a magazine article containing passages translated from Greek tragedy was published — the first such article since 1832, and the last before 1840. The article in question, 'Beauties of the Grecian Drama', appeared in the Metropolitan. It contains one choral ode translated from Sophocles and two passages each from Aeschylus and Euripides, and begins with the author's statement that he has chosen such passages as are not too difficult to translate and which are 'peculiarly eminent for intrinsic sublimity and pathos' in order to give the non-classical reader some idea of the beauties of Greek tragedy.<sup>155</sup> The identity of the

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152 Fox, Death of Demosthenes, 252; Ag. 1125-29. For translation, see Chapter 8, note 124.

153 GM, n.s., xiv (1840), 276.

154 Ath, xii (1839), 985.

155 Met, xv (1836), 195-99. For the passages translated, see Appendix 2, Section A (iii).

author is not known; all that can be said is that it certainly was not Willmott, whose style of translation is quite different from the style of the translations in the Metropolitan.

These translations are attractively written, in a variety of metre and poetic tone. They are generally close in word and feeling to the original passages, with occasional expansions into paraphrase, sometimes only to fill out a line or provide a rhyme, but usually in an attempt to express the full meaning contained in a word or phrase. After one has struggled through the abominable translations of Fox, it is a pleasure to find oneself unable to decide which of these translations to leave out. The best piece is the ten-line stanza translating a few lines from the second stasimon of the Agamemnon, which catches exactly the breathtaking beauty of the Greek poet's description of Helen:

When first she came to Ilion's shore	
You might have sung of one, who bore	
A spirit gentle as the sea	
In its windless smooth tranquillity; —	
Of one to whom by wealth was lent	5
Each blameless grace and ornament.	
Soft was the winning glance and meek	
That darted from her beauteous eye,	
The bloom of love was on her cheek	
To wake th' incautious gazer's sigh.	156 10

The technique here is very slightly expanded paraphrase, intended to bring out the full meaning of all the words. So the Greek phrase φρόνημα . . νηνέμου γαλάνας (Ag. 738-39: 'the spirit of windless sea-calm') is expanded into lines 3-4 in English; and the cryptic line ἀκασκαῖον δ' ἄγαλμα πλούτου (Ag. 740: 'a delicate ornament of wealth') receives an acceptable interpretation in

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156 Met., xv (1836), 199; Ag. 737-42: 'At first, methinks, there came to Ilium the spirit of unruffled calm, a delicate ornament of wealth, a darter of soft glances from the eye, love's flower that stingeth the heart.' (Weir Smyth)

lines 5-6. Lines 7-10 paraphrase a little more freely, but still retain the basic sense and tone of the original, although there is no precise equivalent for *δρξίζουμον* (Ag. 743: 'biting the heart').

The year 1836 also saw the publication in Blackwood's Magazine of a new translation of the Prometheus, the first of three translated plays by Matthew James Chapman to be published there. Matthew James Chapman (1795-1866) was born in Barbados and went to school in Macclesfield, Cheshire. From there he went to Edinburgh University, where he studied medicine from 1812 to 1814, and after a brief period at Leyden University, he returned to Edinburgh to receive the degree of M.D. in 1820, with a thesis bearing the interesting title 'De Affectibus Animi'.<sup>157</sup> This thesis, well larded with quotations from poetry, and devoted to an itemisation of the various emotions and their causes, suggests that its author was not particularly interested in medical science. What Chapman did after his graduation is not known, but on 4th July<sup>1827</sup> he was enrolled as a pensioner at Trinity College, Cambridge, and matriculated at Michaelmas, 1828. He graduated B.A. in 1832 and M.A. in 1835.<sup>158</sup>

While still at Cambridge, he published his first volume of verse, Barbadoes, A Poem (1833), and must have been gratified by the few but encouraging reviews it received.<sup>159</sup> He also had a

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157 Information about Chapman at Edinburgh comes from List of the Graduates in Medicine in the University of Edinburgh from MDCCV to MDCCCLXVI, and from records in the Manuscript Department of Edinburgh University Library. Chapman's thesis is in Edinburgh University Library.

158 Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part 2, Vol II, p. 13.

159 For example, Ath, vi (1833), 414; Bl, xxxiv (1833), 503-28; Met, vii (1833), 73-74. The volume includes translations of two Greek poems, one by Simonides (p. 143) and one by Meleager (p. 145).



poem called 'Ode to the Coming Year' published in Fraser's Magazine in January 1835, which shows the influence of Greek poetry in its choice of an epigraph from Aeschylus (Eum. 515: κύριον μένει τέλος) and in its strict strophic form.<sup>160</sup> Chapman was also an avid reader of Blackwood's Magazine,<sup>161</sup> which was, by the mid-1830s, well into its series of articles and translations from Greek poetry. In 1834 he had submitted a translation in Spenserian stanzas from Odyssey VII, which was published in the May issue,<sup>162</sup> and when 'Christopher North' asked for more translations,<sup>163</sup> Chapman was only too willing to oblige. On 29 May 1835 he sent some translations of Greek pastoral poetry, of which two were published in Blackwood's in the July 1835 number.<sup>164</sup> On 3 July 1835 he sent a modern English version of Chaucer's Man of Law's Tale, which was eventually published in Blackwood's in May 1837.<sup>165</sup> In the meantime Chapman had published a book of translations from Bion, Moschus and Theocritus which was widely and favourably reviewed.<sup>166</sup> At about the same time he had also written translations of the Prometheus and Eumenides and sent them to Edinburgh, where they were duly published in Blackwood's in

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160 FM, xi (1835), 79-81. The Greek phrase is in line 544 of the Loeb edition.

161 The archives of William Blackwood, now in the National Library of Scotland, contain several letters from Chapman, which form the basis of the following account of his translations. In the first of these he describes himself as 'the leal subject of Maga' (NLS MS.4040, f.154).

162 BL, xxxv (1834), 714-15.

163 BL, xxxvii (1835), 656.

164 NLS MS.4040, f.154; BL, xxxviii (1835), 65-69.

165 NLS MS.4080, ff.156-57; BL, xli (1837), 655-67.

166 Theocritus, Bion and Moschus, translated by Matthew James Chapman (London, 1836). The principal reviews are: Ath, ix (1836), 221-22; ER, lxiii (1836), 316-36; FM, xiii (1836), 600-07; NMM, xlvii (1836), 241-42.



December 1836 and March 1837 respectively.<sup>167</sup> He obviously translated these plays mainly for pleasure, because when Blackwood paid him for them, he was very surprised.<sup>168</sup>

By 3 April 1837 Chapman had left Cambridge and was living in London, where he may at last have been practising medicine, but he was also busy planning further contributions to Blackwood's.<sup>169</sup> By 23 December 1837 he had translated the Medea, and sent it to Blackwood with the hope that it might be published in the February number.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, he had plans to translate several more Greek plays — the Alcestis, Bacchae and Hippolytus of Euripides, and the Antigone and Philoctetes of Sophocles — but was prepared to reduce this to the Alcestis, Antigone and Philoctetes if Blackwood thought five was too many.<sup>171</sup> By 30 March 1838 the translation of Alcestis was complete, and was sent to Blackwood with the following letter:

I send you a translation of the Alcestis of Euripides, presuming that the Medea will be printed in your magazine. . . I saw in the number for this month that the Ajax of Sophocles is promised. I mentioned the Philoctetes; but will do the Ajax, if preferred — unless indeed the Ajax is to be by some other hand. I will send the Antigone next.<sup>172</sup>

But although Chapman's Alcestis was published in Blackwood's in September 1838,<sup>173</sup> the Medea failed to appear. Blackwood may have rejected it either because it was not of sufficiently high

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167 See Appendix 1, Section C.

168 NLS MS.4044, ff.131-32.

169 NLS MS.4044, ff.131-36.

170 NLS MS.4044, ff.138-39.

171 NLS MS.4044, ff.138-39.

172 NLS MS.4046, ff.96-97. I have been unable to trace the reference in Blackwood's to this translation of the Ajax.

173 See Appendix 1, Section C.

quality, or because its subject-matter was thought unsuitable. In January 1839 Chapman wrote enquiring about the fate of his Medea, and announcing that his translation of the Antigone was half finished. But he was tiring of his plan for several more translations, and told Blackwood that he would prefer not to do any more if Blackwood thought his readers had had enough.<sup>174</sup> Soon after this Chapman was compelled to return to Barbados on personal business, and did not write to Blackwood again until 5 November 1839, by which time he had completed the Antigone. He sent this to Blackwood, and also took the opportunity to point out that Blackwood had published his translation of the Eumenides a second time, in May 1839 — as Chapman says, 'if not a mistake, a mighty compliment!' — and had even paid him for it twice. 'I am jealous on account of my Medea', adds Chapman plaintively.<sup>175</sup>

After this letter and a brief note written a few days later to accompany another contribution to the magazine,<sup>176</sup> there is no record of any correspondence with Blackwood for many years. The Medea and Antigone were never published, for by the end of 1839 the vogue for translations had gone. Chapman did eventually return to England and set up practice at 25 Albermarle Street, London.<sup>177</sup> In his last years he decided to collect and publish his contributions to Fraser's and Blackwood's, and there is extant a

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174 NLS MS.4048, ff.143-44.

175 NLS MS.4048, ff.145-46. The Eumenides was reprinted in Bl, xlv (1839), 655-714, in a slightly altered version. These alterations clearly cannot have been made by Chapman, and were probably the work of John Wilson.

176 NLS MS.4048, ff.147-48.

177 Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part 2, Vol II, p. 13.

letter to Blackwood written on 3 November 1865 asking Blackwood either to give or lend the volumes of his magazine for 1832-38 for this purpose.<sup>178</sup> Unfortunately Chapman died three weeks later, before his plan was brought to fulfilment. He had already collected his contributions to Fraser's, and these were published posthumously in 1866.<sup>179</sup>

Chapman's three translations of Greek tragedy are competent, but do not have a great deal of life. In their execution, as well as in their impact on the reader, they resemble the translations Elton wrote for the London Magazine. Chapman's main concern seems to have been to keep as close as possible to the wording of his original texts, but this is what makes his translations so dull to read. His blank verse does not have much variation in pace and rhythm, and he shows little originality in his choice of metre for the lyric passages. Of his three translations, the Prometheus is the most successful in giving some life to the characters and the poetry. In the following extract, from Prometheus' description of early man, the translation is accurate, but Chapman has still managed to preserve an air of originality:

Eyes, ears had they, but to no purpose saw,	
Or heard: but like the misty shapes of dreams,	
All things through all their life disjointedly	
Confounded: nor they knew to make of brick	
Houses to front the sun, nor works of wood;	5
Like tiny ants, in underground abodes	
They dwelt, chill in the sunless depths of caves;	
Of fruitful summer, winter, flowery spring,	
They had no certain sign; but they pursued	
Without discernment whatsoe'er they did. <sup>180</sup>	10

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178 NLS MS.4197, f.30.

179 Matthew James Chapman, Hebrew Idylls and Dramas, Originally Published in Fraser's Magazine (London, 1866).

180 B1, xl (1836), 729; PV. 447-57. For translation, see Chapter 8, notes 78-79.

The two added words, 'misty' (l. 2) and 'chill' (l. 7) have been well chosen to fit in with the imagery of the phrases containing them, and the lines read easily, with a speed in keeping with the energy of Prometheus' interest in mankind.

Chapman has also done well with the Polonius-like figure of Oceanus, who comes with sententious advice for Prometheus:

Over a long and weary way,  
Prometheus, am I come to-day,  
This bird of rapid pinion riding,  
And without bit at pleasure guiding,  
That by his instinct well doth know,  
And flies, where I would have him go.  
Drawn by the force of kindred ties,  
In this thy grief I sympathize;  
But kinsmanship apart, I vow  
There's none more dear to me than thou.  
That what I say, I truly say,  
And do no vain mouth-honour pay,  
Learn by the proof, and tell to me  
How I can aid or profit thee.  
Thou shalt not say, howe'er it end,  
Thou hast a truer, firmer friend.<sup>181</sup>

The empty bombast of his words as he arrives on a hippogriff is well matched by the childish rhyming couplets in which his words are spoken.

But the translation of the *Alcestis* has much less life, and although this may in part be due to the unexciting nature of the original play, Chapman's technique of close translation must carry its own share of the blame. This is most noticeable in Chapman's translations of the passages of stichomythia, which always suffer

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181 *Bl*, xl (1836), 726; *PV*. 286-99: 'I am come to the goal of a long journey in my passage to thee, Prometheus, guiding by mine own will, without a bit, this swift-winged bird. For thy fate, thou may'st be sure, I feel compassion. Kinship, methinks, constraineth me to this; and, apart from blood, there is none to whom I should pay greater respect than to thee. Thou shalt know this for simple sooth and that it is not in me to utter vain and glozing words; come, tell me — what aid can I render thee? For thou shalt never say thou hast a friend more loyal than Oceanus.' (Weir Smyth)



in any translation that eschews paraphrase. The following passage, in which the dull-witted Herakles discovers that his host's wife has died, needs more than Chapman's literal but lifeless translation if it is to be dramatically effective:

Herakles Grieve not so much; the lady was a stranger —  
The rulers of the mansion are alive.

Servant Alive? Do you not know our sad mischance?

Her. I do, unless your master did deceive me.

Ser. He is too hospitable.

Her. For the death  
Of a mere stranger, should I not have met  
With entertainment?

Ser. Yet she was most near!

Her. Is there some wo he did not tell me of?

Ser. Farewell! our master's trouble toucheth us.

Her. Your words express more grief than for a stranger.

Ser. Your revels, in that case, had not disturbed me.

Her. Have I then been ill-treated by my host?

Ser. You did not come at a convenient time;  
Grief is among us, and you see our hair  
Is shorn, our dress is of the mourning hue.

Her. But who is dead? one of the children gone?  
Or his old father?

Ser. No! his wife is dead.<sup>182</sup>

Finally, Chapman's translation of the Eumenides, which is

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182 Bl, xliv (1838), 422; Alc. 805-21: 'Her. The woman who died was a foreigner. Don't grieve too much. For the masters of this house are alive. Ser. What do you mean, alive? Don't you know the misfortunes in the house? Her. I do, if your master hasn't deceived me. Ser. He is far too hospitable. Her. Must I be poorly treated because a stranger is dead? Ser. Oh yes, of course — far too much a stranger. Her. Do you mean some misfortune has occurred and he hasn't told me? Ser. Goodbye. It's for us to care about our masters' misfortunes. Her. These words don't stem from grief for a stranger. Ser. No; otherwise I would not have been angry to see you making merry. Her. Then have I been wrongly treated by my hosts? Ser. You did not come to the house at a fit time for a welcome. For we are in mourning, and you see shorn hair and black-robed clothing. Her. But who has died? Is it one of the children that's gone, or the old father? Ser. No, guest, but Admetus' wife has died.'



equally closely translated, has lost the atmosphere of horror that the utterances of the Chorus of Furies impart to the original play. Their speech as they arrive at the temple of Athene in pursuit of Orestes begins in iambic trimeters containing imagery drawn from hunting, and is bloodthirsty in tone without being bloodcurdling. Then as they draw closer and spot Orestes, their utterance shifts to lyric metre filled with ghoulish threats. To be equally effective, a translation must echo this change in mood and rhythm; but although Chapman changes his metre from blank verse to shorter rhyming lines, he somehow fails to give the vengeful cries of the Furies any note of conviction:

Leader of the Chorus Here is the trail plain of our fugitive;  
 Follow the dumb Informer, a sure guide.  
 For as the quick hound tracks the wounded fawn,  
 We trace him by the blood and drops of gore.  
 But my flank pants with very weariness;  
 For I have ranged o'er every spot of earth,  
 And without wings have flown across the sea;  
 No slower than a ship, pursuing him;  
 And now the wretch is cowering hereabout.

Chorus The smell of human blood doth cheer me,  
 Assurance that my game is near me.  
 Look ye here, and look ye there,  
 Here and there and everywhere,  
 Lest the mother-slayer flee  
 And awhile unpunished be.

Here he finds help, and twining round  
 Athena's Image would submit  
 To trial for the murder done.  
 In vain — the blood is on the ground!  
 Once shed, who can recover it?  
 The red dew, once outpoured, is gone.  
 Come! for thy marrow and thy blood  
 Must be our odious draught and food.  
 Come, impious victim! hither, hither!  
 The red foam from thy limbs we drink.<sup>183</sup>

It is worth comparing Medwin's translation (pp. 367-68 above) with this one, to see how a less literal translation can be more

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183 Bl, xli (1837), 390-91; Eum. 245-66. For translation, see note 79 above.

successful in carrying the inner meaning and dramatic effect of the original work, but at the expense of some literal precision.

Only one translator remains. This is Lord Lytton, who included translations from Aeschylus and Sophocles in the second volume of his history of Athens, which was published in 1837.<sup>184</sup> Lytton allotted one chapter each to Aeschylus and Sophocles. Euripides was omitted because he is most closely associated with post-Periclean Athens, and Lytton ended his history with the death of Pericles in 429 B.C.<sup>185</sup> He illustrated his account of these two tragedians and their work with several translated passages of varying length.<sup>186</sup> Compared with the methods of other translators after 1830, Lytton's technique is old-fashioned in its apparent attempt to imitate the kind of overwrought drama that was popular in his own day, instead of trying to reproduce the individual voices of his original authors.

This is why he translates the closing speech in the Prometheus, which is in lyric metre, into blank verse,<sup>187</sup> and then translates Clytemnestra's description of the chain of beacons, which is in iambic trimeters, into a kind of irregular ode.<sup>188</sup> He tries to justify the latter, which he thinks is 'a very inadequate reflection, though not an unfaithful paraphrase',<sup>189</sup> by explaining

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184 Edward Lytton Bulwer, Athens: Its Rise and Fall, with Views of the Literature, Philosophy, and Social Life of the Athenian People.

185 For Aeschylus, see Athens, II.14-63; for Sophocles, see Athens, II.515-96. On the exclusion of Euripides, see Athens, II.523.

186 For a list of the passages translated, see Appendix 2, Section A (iii).

187 Athens, II.40; PV. 1080-93.

188 Athens, II.43-45; Ag. 281-316.

189 Athens, II.42.

that 'the whole animation and rapidity of the original would be utterly lost in the stiff construction and protracted rhythm of that metre',<sup>190</sup> quite ignoring the fact that Aeschylus seems to have managed well enough within the rhythmical restrictions of iambic trimeters. Furthermore, his own translation is both 'unfaithful' and 'inadequate'. Had he possessed greater poetic powers, he should not have found it beyond him to translate into a regular rhythm without losing any of the energy of the Greek lines; but as it is, he has simply rewritten the Greek text, with frequent additions, so that Aeschylus disappears from the page:

A gleam — a gleam — from Ida's height,	
By the fire-god sent, it came; —	
From watch to watch it leapt that light,	
As a rider rode the Flame!	
It shot through the startled-sky,	5
And the torch of that blazing glory	
Old Lemnos caught on high,	
On its holy promontory,	
And sent it on, the jocund sign,	
To Athos, Mount of Jove divine.	10
Wildly the while, it rose from the isle,	
So that the might of the journeying Light	
Skimmed over the back of the gleaming brine!	
Farther and faster speeds it on,	
Till the watch that keep Macistus steep —	15
See it burst like a blazing Sun!	
Doth Macistus sleep	
On his tower-clad steep?	
No! rapid and red doth the wild fire sweep;	
It flashes afar on the wayward stream	20
Of the wild Euripus, the rushing beam!	
It rouses the light on Messapion's height,	
And they feed its breath with the withered heath.	191

There is no logic in his choice of rhyme or line length, except the logic of the idle versifier who always does what seems easiest. The frequently added lines, such as lines 5-6 and 11-12, as well as extra words like 'blazing' (l. 16) and 'wild' (l. 21) and the very

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190 Athens, II.42-43n.

191 Athens, II.43-44; Ag. 281-95. For translation, see note 15 above.

rhythm of the whole passage, have nothing to do with Aeschylus and everything to do with Lytton's subjective interpretation of the speech.

Even when he does translate iambic trimeters into blank verse, he still distorts the original text by rewriting it as romantic drama. This technique is particularly unsatisfactory when he translates Sophocles, who so often achieved his dramatic effects by understatement. In the following passage from the Oedipus Tyrannus, in which Oedipus asks Creon to look after his two daughters, Lytton adds material and rewrites to squeeze as much pathos as he can from a speech in which Sophocles used much more moderate language to achieve pathos without melodrama:

For my fate, let it pass! My children, Creon!  
 My sons — nay, they the bitter wants of life  
 May master — they are Men! — my girls — my darlings —  
 Why, never sate I at my household board  
 Without their blessed looks — our very bread 5  
 We brake together; — thou'lt be kind to them  
 For my sake, Creon — and, (O latest prayer!)  
 Let me but touch them — feel them with these hands.  
 And pour such sorrow as may seek farewell  
 O'er ills that must be theirs! By thy pure line — 10  
 For thine is pure — do this, sweet prince. Methinks  
 I should not miss these eyes, could I but touch them.  
 What shall I say to move thee?  
 Sobs! — and do I,  
 Oh do I hear my sweet ones? Hast thou sent,  
 In mercy sent, my children to my arms? 15  
 Speak — speak — I do not dream!<sup>192</sup>

Lytton adds such phrases as 'blessed looks' (l. 5), 'O latest prayer!' (l. 7) and 'sweet prince' (l. 11), and injects much repetition, as in 'feel them' (l. 8), 'For thine is pure' (l. 11) and 'Oh do I' (l. 14) to increase the pathos. More serious than this is his inaccuracy in the paraphrased translations in lines 2-3. Here, he

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192 Athens, II.533-34; OT. 1459-75. For translation, see Chapter 9, note 160.



represents the Greek

οὐδὲν ποτὲ χεῖν, ἄνδρες εἰσὶν ὥστε μὴ  
ἐνθ' ἂν ᾤσι, τοῦ βίου

(OT. 1460-61: 'They are men, so that they will never lack the means to live, wherever they may be'), by writing

may, they the bitter wants of life  
May master;

and follows this by condensing the Greek line

ταῖν δ' ἀθλίαιν αἰκτραῖν τε παρθένοιν ἐμαῖν

(OT. 1462: 'but my two poor wretched girls') into 'my girls — my darlings', which is a lazy and inaccurate version of the original. Lazy paraphrase is only too frequent in Lytton's translations, suggesting that if Lytton's scholarship was not wanting, then his temperament was unequal to the rigours of conscientious translation. There were several reviews of Athens, but only one offered any opinion on Lytton's translations. This was the Edinburgh Review, which said only that the translation was generally good, but 'here and there a little overdone'.<sup>193</sup>

The most obvious difference between this third and final period and the two preceding is that not one year goes by without some translation from Greek tragedy appearing in print, although the second period had come close to this. Even more important is the increase in the number of whole plays published, and the appearance of many of these in the two leading magazines of the day. From one complete play in the first period, the number increased to ten in the second (reckoning Dale's Sophocles as

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<sup>193</sup> ER, lxxv (July 1837), 151-77; see especially pp. 171-77 (N.B. The two monthly numbers in vol. lxxv have separate pagination). For other reviews, see Ath, x (1837), 303-04, 316-17; EcR, 4th s., ii (1837), 151-77; FM, xvi (1837), 347-56; MR, 1837, vol. ii, 185-95.



seven plays); in the third period fourteen new translations of whole plays appeared, of which no less than seven appeared in either Blackwood's or Fraser's. At the same time, the magazines virtually ceased to print extracts from the tragedies, the article in the Metropolitan being the only one of its kind. As before, paraphrase is commoner in the translations of selected passages; but in the period as a whole, the translators are anxious to give closer translations that are truer to the words and thoughts of the original authors. It is also noticeable that the neglect of Euripides grows even worse, while Aeschylus becomes even more popular, with three new translations of the Agamemnon and four of the Prometheus.

In the next ten years the periodical press continued to show some interest in Greek tragedy. G.H. Lewes contributed two articles on Greek tragedy to the Foreign Quarterly Review in 1844 and 1845,<sup>194</sup> and one to Blackwood's in 1845;<sup>195</sup> and John Wilson wrote an article on translations of Aeschylus in 1851 for the North British Review.<sup>196</sup> But apart from yet another full-length translation of the Prometheus in an obscure magazine called The Dial in 1843,<sup>197</sup> magazines no longer thought it worth their while to publish translations of Greek tragedy, in whole or in part. In fact, most of the full-length translations published in these

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194 'German and English Translations from the Greek', FQR, xxxiii (1844), 459-67; 'Antigone and its Critics', FQR, xxxv (1845), 56-73.

195 'The Greek and Romantic Drama', Bl, lix (1846), 54-73.

196 'Translations of Aeschylus', North British Review, xvi (1851), 259-78.

197 The Dial, iii (1843), 363-386. This translation, appearing in the January number, is entitled, 'Prometheus Bound, a new and careful translation by H.D.T'.

years were schoolboy 'cribs'.<sup>198</sup> By 1840 the general reading public had had enough of Greek tragedy, and although some interest in the subject continued throughout the Victorian period in the work of such poets as Matthew Arnold, FitzGerald, Browning and Swinburne, there was never again the same demand for new verse translations or for popularising articles introducing Greek tragedy to the unlearned.

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198 For the years 1841-1850, Foster lists eight translations from Aeschylus (pp. 3-4), eight from Euripides (p. 48) and eight from Sophocles (p. 110). The vast majority are prose 'cribs' of single plays.

## CHAPTER 11. CONCLUSION

The development of interest in Greek tragedy after 1800 falls into three overlapping stages. At first, the general public was ignorant, while the more highly educated read Greek tragedy as part of their curriculum and scholars edited Greek plays in preference to other classical texts. Then, when the new magazines built their circulation on the growing enthusiasm for literature of all kinds, their editors introduced Greek literature as a subject worthy of their readers' attention. Homer had in a way already been assimilated into English literature as a result of the great success of Pope's translation, and much pastoral and lyric poetry was also familiar through translations and imitations. That left tragedy, which had formerly had a limited appeal because of bad texts and perplexing dramatic conventions. It was felt, quite rightly, that the general public must be introduced gradually to this new and difficult kind of poetry, and the evangelists of Greek tragedy in the magazines therefore began with explanations for the uninitiated, illustrated by translations of the most immediately attractive passages. Even those who had studied Greek tragedy at school would benefit from the articles of Lockhart and Elton in particular, for Greek tragedy had not then been taught to them as literature. By the early 1830s this painless education was apparently complete, and the reading public was ready to welcome full-length translations. Although the magazine articles on Greek tragedy in these years formed part of a wider

vogue for Greek literature, they were always the most important part: at one time or another every magazine found space for Greek tragedy, while other genres had more limited coverage. The frequency of separately published translations increased more or less concurrently with these three stages.

By 1840 the general public seems to have felt that it now knew about Greek tragedy, and the articles on the subject which appear in the next ten years are no longer of the popularising kind, but treat Greek tragedy as a literary topic deserving more serious study. The development of interest in Greek tragedy after 1840 is a subject in need of proper investigation, since there are translations by such poets as FitzGerald and Browning, and imitations by Matthew Arnold and Swinburne. Richard Jenkyns has a useful chapter on George Eliot's use of Greek tragedy in her novels, but this could be perhaps extended into an investigation of the relationship between her use of Greek tragedy and the articles of G.H. Lewes, mentioned at the end of Chapter 10.

As for the translations themselves, they might also be divided into three kinds, representing three overlapping stages. Before 1817 the influence of the eighteenth century is still noticeable in the paraphrastic technique and the choice of metre and vocabulary. The second kind, best typified by Lockhart's translations, although some elements of it can also be seen in Peacock's choral odes, makes a conscious effort to present Greek tragedy as an honorary member of the Romantic movement. Language and metre follow the new trends, while paraphrase is limited to a rewriting of the main ideas in the original, with little or no addition of extraneous material. The danger of this kind of



translation was that it allowed a certain degree of subjective interpretation on the part of the translator, as he sought to convince readers that Greek tragedy was not really alien to contemporary tastes, and its worst excesses can be seen in the translations of R.A. Willmott.

The third kind of translation sought to keep as close as possible to the letter of the original, retaining original idioms and imagery whenever possible, and giving accurate equivalents only when a literal rendering would defeat its purpose. This was a considerable advance on the second, interpretative kind of translation, for it tried to allow the original author to speak directly to the nineteenth-century reader, and to shift the task of interpretation from translator to reader. The drawback of this kind of translation is that by seeking closeness, the translator can kill the poetry. Elton and Chapman both fell into this error, while Dale, Morehead and Medwin managed on the whole to use language, imagery and lyric metre in a way which did proper justice to Aeschylus and Sophocles. Euripides did not fare so well: the blight cast on him by Schlegel ensured that for many years Euripides featured mainly in the tortured prose of schoolboy cribs.

One of the most surprising things — and the most gratifying — is the generally high quality of the translations, both in point of scholarship and as English verse. Although it is questionable whether any of the translators thought of their work as being suitable for use on the English stage, the best of them have written work which is actable, either because (like Lockhart) they have deliberately adapted Greek conventions to make them more English, or (like Morehead, Dale and Medwin) because the dramatic



merits of the original plays have not been destroyed in the translation. And yet none of these translations has survived the passage of time. Morehead's incomplete translation of Agamemnon suffered by its publication in a dying magazine, while the work of Medwin and Dale had to compete with Valpy's Family Classical Library. Although Valpy used old eighteenth-century translations, his editions undercut the cost of Dale's Sophocles, and probably made a collected edition of Medwin's Aeschylus an economic impossibility.

It is often said that translations have to be done anew for each successive generation. I am not so sure that this is necessarily true any more. There was a time when Shakespeare was rewritten for each successive generation, but one achievement of the twentieth century is that Shakespeare's text, by and large, is left alone. This is because the educated public has been taught to accept that in drama (and in poetry as a whole) there are many conventions, all of equal validity. In the same way, I feel that a translation which acts as a window through which the original may be seen, rather than as a distorting mirror, may have a validity outlasting the linguistic and metrical conventions in which it was written. The ideal of the translators in the late Romantic period was to write a translation which would affect English-speaking readers in just the same way as Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides had affected the Athenians. We shall, of course, never know just what their effect on an Athenian audience was. But I know how I feel when I read Sophocles or Aeschylus; and I often experienced a similar feeling when reading Dale, or Morehead, or Medwin. This is a purely subjective interpretation,

but it is enough to suggest that there are at least a few early nineteenth-century translations of Greek tragedy which served their public well at that time, and which deserve to be better known than they are at present.

## APPENDIX 1

## VERSE TRANSLATIONS OF GREEK TRAGEDY PUBLISHED 1800-1840

A. Reprints of Eighteenth-Century Translations

Aeschylus. The Tragedies of Aeschylus, translated by R. Potter  
[first edition, Norwich, 1777].

New edition, Oxford, 1808.

New edition, London, 1809.

New edition, London, 1812.

New edition, London, 1819.

New edition, London, 1821.

Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets: Vol. 1,

Aeschylus [illustrated by 13 of Flaxman's drawings], London,  
1831.

Valpy's Family Classical Library: Vol. XLV, Aeschylus

[including extracts from J.S. Harford's 'Essay on the Grecian  
Drama'], London, 1833.

Euripides. The Tragedies of Euripides, translated by R. Potter  
[first edition, London, 1781-83].

New edition, 2 vols., Oxford and London, 1808.

New edition, 2 vols., London, 1814.

New edition, vols., London, 1823.

Valpy's Family Classical Library: Vols. XXXIV-XXXVI, Euripides,  
London, 1832.

———. The Nineteen Tragedies and Fragments of Euripides,  
translated by M. Wodhull [first edition, London, 1782].

New edition, 3 vols., London, 1809.

———. The Alcestis of Euripides, acted at the Triennial  
Visitation of Reading School, October 14, 16, 17, 1809, translated  
by Mr Potter, Reading, [1809].

———. The Hecuba of Euripides, represented at the Triennial  
Visitation of Reading School, October 15, 16, 17, 1827, translated  
by Mr. Potter, Reading, 1827.

———. The Orestes of Euripides, as performed at the Triennial  
Visitation of Reading School, October, 1821, chiefly from Mr.  
Potter's translation, Reading, [1821].

Sophocles. The Tragedies of Sophocles from the Greek, by Thomas Francklin [first edition, London, 1759].

New edition, London, 1809.

Valpy's Family Classical Library: Vol. XXXIII, Sophocles, London, 1832.

———. The Tragedies of Sophocles, translated by R. Potter [first edition, London, 1788].

New edition, Oxford and London, 1808.

New edition, Oxford, 1813.

New edition, Oxford, 1819.

New edition, London, 1820.

———. A Free Translation of the Oedipus Tyrannus, by T. Maurice [first published in T. Maurice, Poems and Miscellaneous Pieces, 1779].

included in Westminster Abbey; with Other Occasional Poems, London, 1813.

another edition, London, 1822.

———. The Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles, acted at the Triennial Visitation of Reading School, October 15, 16, 17, 1806, translated by Dr. Franklin, Reading, [1806].

#### B. New Verse Translations, Separately Published

Aeschylus. [Tragedies, translated by Thomas Medwin, London, 1832-34.] [Listed in NUC. Apparently contains the translations of Sept., Cho., Eum. and Pers. from Fraser's Magazine.]

———. Agamemnon, translated by John Symmons, London, 1824.

———. Αἰσχύλου Ἀγαμέμνων Τριγλωττος, textum ad fidem editionum. . . recognovit, notasque. . . adjecit, J. Kennedy. . . Teutsch übersetzt von Heinrich Voss, English, translated by James Kennedy, London, 1829.

———. The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, Illustrated by a Dissertation on Grecian Tragedy, translated by John Scandrett Harford, London, 1831.

———. Agamemnon, translated by Thomas Medwin, London, 1832.

———. Agamemnon [included in The Death of Demosthenes and Other Original Poems: with the Prometheus and Agamemnon of Aeschylus, translated from the Greek], translated by George Croker Fox, London, 1839.

- . The Persians. Translated on a New Plan, by William Palin, London, 1829.
- . Prometheus Bound, a Tragedy, from the Greek of Aeschylus, [translated by Thomas Medwin], Sienna, 1827.
- . Prometheus Bound, a Tragedy, Translated from the Greek of Aeschylus, into English Verse, by Thomas Medwin, London, 1832.
- . Prometheus Bound, Translated from the Greek of Aeschylus, and Miscellaneous Poems by the Translator, [translated by Elizabeth Barrett], London, 1833.
- . The Prometheus of Aeschylus, and the Electra of Sophocles, Translated from the Greek. . . Also, a Few Original Poems, by George Croker Fox, London, 1835.  
[Fox's translation of Prometheus was reprinted in The Death of Demosthenes in 1839. See above under Aeschylus, Agamemnon.]
- Euripides. The Cyclops, translated by Percy Bysshe Shelley [in Posthumous Poems, London, 1824].
- Sophocles. The Tragedies of Sophocles Translated into English Verse, by Thomas Dale, 2 vols., London, 1824.
- . The Electra of Sophocles, [translated by William Drennan], Belfast, 1817.
- . Electra, translated by George Croker Fox [see under Aeschylus, Prometheus, above], London, 1835.
- . Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles; translated into English Verse. With a Few Original Pieces, London, 1832.
- Joseph Anstice, Selections from the Choric Poetry of the Greek Dramatic Writers, Translated into English Verse, London, 1832.
- C. Verse Translations Published in the Magazines
- Aeschylus. Agamemnon, translated by Thomas Medwin, FM, xviii (1838), 505-39.
- . Choephoroe, translated by Thomas Medwin, FM, vi (1832), 509-35.
- . Eumenides, translated by Thomas Medwin, FM, ix (1834), 553-73.
- . ———, translated by Matthew James Chapman, Bl, xlv (1837), 386-403; reprinted in Bl, xlv (1839), 695-714.
- . Persians, translated by Thomas Medwin, FM, vii (1833),



17-43.

———. Prometheus Bound, translated by Matthew James Chapman, B1, x1 (1836), 721-40.

———. ———, translated by Thomas Medwin, FM, xvi (1837), 209-33.

———. Seven before Thebes, translated by Thomas Medwin, FM, vii (1833), 437-58,

Euripides. Alcestis, translated by Matthew James Chapman, B1, xliv (1838), 408-28.

———. The Cyclop [translated by ?John Wilson], B1, xxxii (1832), 652-69.

## APPENDIX 2

### PARTIAL TRANSLATIONS OF GREEK TRAGEDY

#### A. Passages Translated

(If a translation was published anonymously, the name of the translator, where known, is given in square brackets. Some translations were not published during the period in question; for these, the approximate date of composition is given instead. In several instances, including those translations not published during the period, references are added in square brackets to the most readily available editions. For the full titles of the three works cited as Collections, Selections and Specimens, see Section B below.)

#### (i) 1800-1818

Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 1-39, 72-82, 228-52, 258-316, 403-26, 538-41, 563-612, 653-74, 681-715, 737-49, 773-81, 887-930, 950-57, 973-1330, 1372-1406, 1412-25, 1462-88, 1497-1512, 1560-66, 1625-27, 1654-60. [Translated by R. Morehead], published in EdM, i (1817), 300-06, 443; ii (1818), 28-31, 112-15.

———, Choephoroe, 183-263, 489-509, 1048-62. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in Bl, i (1817), 149-50.

———, Prometheus, 526-36, 552-60. Translated by Lord Byron, published in Hours of Idleness (1807) [Byron's Complete Poetical Works, ed. J.J. McGann, I.75-76].

———, ———, 887-93. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written c. 1812 [Works of T.L. Peacock, ed. H.F.B. Brett-Smith and C.E. Jones, VII.223].

———, ———, 447-71, 478-83, 953-69, 989-96. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in Bl, i (1817), 42.

———, Septem, 42-53, 78-126, 150-55, 288-368, 568-92, 1032-47. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in Bl, i (1817), 354-55.

Euripides, Alcestis, 328-68. [Translated by R. Bland], published in Collections (1813), 241-42.

———, ———, 435-59, 985-1005. [Translated by J.H. Merivale], published in Collections (1813), 243-44.

- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 962-1005. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written after 1811 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.212-14].
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1159-63. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written c. 1805 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.417].
- \_\_\_\_\_, Andromache, 103-16. [Translated by T. Denman], published in Collections (1813), 261.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Hecuba, 342-78. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written c. 1815 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.223-24].
- \_\_\_\_\_, Hercules Furens, 637-72. Translated by T.L. Peacock written after 1811 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.214-15].
- \_\_\_\_\_, Hippolytus, 176-266. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written c. 1812 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.216-220].
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 525-64. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written after 1812 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.221-22].
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 732-75. Translated by Lord Thurlow, published in GM, lxxxiv<sup>1</sup> (1814), 165-66.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 73-87, 176-249, 413-25, 1090-99, 1173-93, 1408-14, 1444-60. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in EdM, i (1817), 430-42.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Iphigeneia in Aulide, 1211-52. Anonymous [?R. Bland or ?J.H. Merivale], published in Collections (1813), 264-66.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1-43, 631-80, 1171-1252, 1547-60. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in EdM, i (1817), 241-43.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Medea, 627-62. Translated by Lord Byron, published in Hours of Idleness (1807) [Byron's Poetical Works, I.90-92].
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1-6. Translated by Lord Byron, written in June 1810 [Byron's Poetical Works, I.284].
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1021-80. [Translated by R. Bland], published in Collections (1813), 248-50.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1028-37. Translated by T. Partridge, published in GM, lxxxv<sup>2</sup> (1815), 350.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Phoenissae, 784-833. [Translated by R. Morehead], published in Poetical Epistles and Specimens of Translation (1813), 75-78.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 159-69, 304-26, 358-86, 432-37, 446-47, 452-58, 503-23, 1335-49, 1428-59. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in Bl, i (1817), 356-57.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Troades, 353-405, 445-61. [Translated by R. Bland], published in Collections (1813), 256-59.

———, ———, 634-83. [Translated by J.H. Merivale], published in Collections (1813), 259-60.

Sophocles, Ajax, 485-524, 646-92. [Translated by R. Bland], published in Collections (1813), 252-56.

———, Antigone, 582-91. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written c. 1812-1813. [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.228-29].

———, Electra, 1126-70. [Translated by R. Bland], published in Collections (1813), 245-46.

———, ———, 1101-1226, 1403-16. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in Bl, i (1817), 151-52.

———, Oedipus Coloneus, 1-20, 36-40, 84-110. [Translated by R. Bland], published in Collections (1813), 261-64.

———, ———, 1211-48. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written c. 1812-1813 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.224-26].

———, ———, 1586-1662. Translated by T.L. Peacock, written c. 1815 [Works of T.L. Peacock, VII.226-28].

———, ———, 668-719. Translated by H.S. Boyd, published in GM, lxxxv<sup>2</sup> (1815), 254.

———, Philoctetes, 927-62. [Translated by R. Bland], published in Collections (1813), 247-48.

———, ———, 276-313, 468-501, 662-66, 927-58, 1453-64. [Translated by J.G. Lockhart], published in Bl, i (1817), 594-95.

#### (ii) 1819-1830

Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 855-1454. [Translated by C.A. Elton], published in LM, viii (1823), 262-72.

———, Eumenides, 34-73, 94-142, 179-90, 307-96. Translated by J. Smith, published in The House of Atreus (1819), xxxix-xlvi.

———, ———, 1-234. [Translated by ?R. Morehead], published in EdM, viii (1821), 520-22.

Euripides, Hecuba, 59-97, 177-215, 905-32. [Translated by R.A. Willmott], published in LM, xxiii (1829), 473-75.

———, ———, 154-76. [Translated by R.A. Willmott], published in FM, ii (1830), 54.

———, Medea, 1-48. Translated by Rev. J. Brown, published in MM, li (1821), 439-40.

———, ———, 1002-80. [Translated by ?H.S. Van Dyk], published in LM, viii (1823), 611-13.

———, Orestes, 71-347. [Translated by C.A. Elton], published in LM, viii (1823), 503-08.

———, ———, 211-315. Translated by 'J.D.', published in GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1828), 598-99.

———, ———, 136-73. [Translated by R.A. Willmott], published in FM, ii (1830), 57.

Sophocles, Ajax, 596-645. Translated by W.M. Praed, written 29 November 1821 [Poems of W.M. Praed, ed. D. Coleridge, II.349-50].

———, Electra, 1098-1504. [Translated by C.A. Elton], published in LM, viii (1823), 373-80.

———, ———, 1126-70. Translated by H.S. Boyd, published in Thoughts on an Illustrious Exile, with Other Poems (1825) [GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1826), 156].

———, Oedipus Coloneus, 234-86, 1414-46, 1556-78. Translated by T. Dale, published in The Outlaw of Taurus (1820), 113-20.

———, Oedipus Tyrannus, 463-511. Anonymous, published in GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1827), 499-500.

———, Philoctetes, 169-90. [Translated by R.A. Willmott], published in FM, ii (1830), 54.

### (iii) 1831-1840

Aeschylus, Agamemnon, 40-257. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 3-22.

———, ———, 355-474. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 25-36.

———, ———, 681-781. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 39-45.

———, ———, 1186-92. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 50n.

———, ———, 1217-22. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 51n.

———, ———, 281-311. [Translated by R.A. Willmott], published in NMM, xxxv (1832), 221-22.

———, ———, 737-42. Anonymous, published in Met, xv (1836), 199.

———, ———, 1178-97. Anonymous, published in Met, xv (1836), 197.

———, ———, 281-316, 410-26, 1217-19, 1327-30. Translated



by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.43-48.

———, Choephoroe, 22-83. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 49-54.

———, ———, 948-59. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 5-6n.

———, ———, 534, 890-91, 893, 896-98. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.49-50.

———, Eumenides, 307-96. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 57-63.

———, ———, 490-565. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 67-69.

———, Persae, 610-18. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.57.

———, Prometheus, 955-59. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 16n.

———, ———, 88-92, 101-08, 407-35, 554-60, 1080-93. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.35-40.

———, Septem, 384-94, 397-405, 672-76, 1037-38. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.54-57.

———, Supplices, 646-51. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 51n.

———, ?Fragment [not listed by Nauck under Aeschylus]. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 52n.

Euripides, Alcestis, 435-75. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 181-83.

———, ———, 568-605. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 187-89.

———, ———, 962-1005. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 193-98.

———, Electra, 432-86. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 201-03.

———, ———, 699-746. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 207-09.

———, Hecuba, 444-83. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 149-51.

———, ———, 906-51. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 153-55.

———, Helen, 1107-13. Translated by J. Anstice, published

in Selections (1832), 89-90n.

———, Hippolytus, 1267-82. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 173-77.

———, Ion, 82-183. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 233-37.

———, —, 715-18. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 135n.

———, —, 1074-86. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 133-34n.

———, Iphigeneia in Aulide, 1036-81. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 219-21.

———, Iphigeneia in Tauris, 1089-1151. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 225-30.

———, Medea, 824-65. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 167-69.

———, —, 1224-30. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 107n.

———, Orestes, 317-27. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 60n.

———, —, 152-81, 211-306. [Translated by ?R.A. Willmott], published in BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 394-97.

———, —, 140-85. Anonymous, published in Met, xv (1836), 196.

———, Phoenissae, 226-38. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 134-35n.

———, —, 784-833. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 159-63.

———, —, 1539-45. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 9-10n.

———, Supplices, 860-71. Anonymous, published in Met, xv (1836), 199.

———, Troades, 799-859. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 213-15.

Sophocles, Ajax, 845-65. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.576-77.

———, Antigone, 332-72. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 115-18.

———, —, 453-57. Translated by J. Anstice, published

- in Selections (1832), 81n.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 582-626. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 121-24.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 781-805. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 127-30.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1115-51. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 133-37.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 100-62. Anonymous, published in Specimens (1832), 19-22.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 808-31, 1115-51, 1231-40. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.549-56.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Electra, 1126-59. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 33-35n.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 709-63. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.560-68.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Oedipus Coloneus, 668-719. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 87-96.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1044-97. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 99-101.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1211-48. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 105-12.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 668-719. Anonymous, published in Specimens (1832), 12-14.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1211-48. Anonymous, published in Specimens (1832), 15-16.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 1556-78. Anonymous, published in Specimens (1832), 17-18.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 668-719. Anonymous, published in Met, xv (1836), 198-99.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 434-44, 671-93, 1267-72, 1352-96, 1418-19, 1444-47, 1547-52, 1595-97, 1611-28, 1645-65. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.536-47.
- \_\_\_\_\_, Oedipus Tyrannus, 151-215. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 73-77.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 863-910. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 81-84.
- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 151-215. Anonymous, published in Specimens (1832), 5-9.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 463-511. Anonymous, published in Specimens (1832), 9-11.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 258-65, 316-17, 350-53, 946-49, 1056-72, 1459-80. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.525-34.

\_\_\_\_\_, Philoctetes, 96-99, 1176-1211. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.580-84.

\_\_\_\_\_, Trachiniae, 94-140. Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 141-45.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 94-111, 144-47, 547-48, 765-66. Translated by Lord Lytton, published in Athens (1837), II.569-73.

\_\_\_\_\_, Fragment 234 (Nauck). Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 136n.

\_\_\_\_\_, Fragment 855 (Nauck). Translated by J. Anstice, published in Selections (1832), 127-28n.

#### B. Books Published 1800-1840, Containing Passages Translated from Greek Tragedy

J. Anstice, Selections from the Choric Poetry of the Greek Dramatic Writers, Translated into English Verse (London, 1832). (Cited in Section A as Selections)

H.S. Boyd, Thoughts on an Illustrious Exile, Occasioned by the Persecution of the Protestants in 1815, with Other Poems (London, 1825).

Lord Byron, Hours of Idleness (Newark, 1807).

Collections from the Greek Anthology, and from the Pastoral, Elegiac, and Dramatic Poets of Greece, by the Rev. R. Bland, and others. New edition (London, 1813). (Cited in Section A as Collections)

Edward Lytton Bulwer, Athens, its Rise and Fall, with Views of the Literature, Philosophy, and Social Life of the Athenian People, 2 vols. (London, 1837).

[R. Morehead], Poetical Epistles and Specimens of Translation (Edinburgh, 1813).

John Smith, The House of Atreus and the House of Laius; Tragedies Founded on the Greek Drama (London, 1819).

Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles, Translated into English Verse (London, 1832). (Cited in Section A as Specimens)



## APPENDIX 3

EDITIONS OF GREEK TRAGEDY BY ENGLISH SCHOLARS, WITH A LIST OF  
REVIEWS

The list includes both scholarly works and editions for use in schools. Reprints of editions by English scholars published before 1800 are not included, with the sole exception of Porson's work on Euripides. The reviews are those contained in the eighteen general periodicals surveyed in Chapter 5.

A. Aeschylus

Aeschylus, Tragedies, text of Stanley, edited by S. Butler, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1809-16).

Reviews: BC, xli (1813), 387-97, 460-69.

EcR, v<sup>2</sup> (1809), 997-1011.

ER, xv (1809-10), 152-63, 315-22; xix (1811-12), 477-508.

MR, lxiii (1810), 162-74; lxxvi (1815), 373-81; xc (1819), 265-76.

QR, iii (1810), 389-98.

———, ———, edited by J Scholefield (Cambridge, 1828).

Review: GM, cii<sup>2</sup> (1832), 39-44, 130-35.

———, Supplices and Eumenides, edited by G. Burges, 2 pt. (London, 1821, 1822). No reviews.

———, Agamemnon, edited by C.J. Blomfield (Cambridge, 1818).

Review: QR, xxv (1821), 505-29.

———, ———, edited by J. Kennedy, with German translation by H. Voss and English translation by J. Kennedy (London, 1829).

No reviews.

———, ———, edited by T.W. Peile (London, 1839). No reviews.

———, Choephoroe, edited by C.J. Blomfield (Cambridge, 1824).

No reviews.

———, ———, edited by T.W. Peile (London, 1840). No reviews.

———, Persae, edited by C.J. Blomfield (Cambridge, 1814).

Reviews: BC, n.s., iv (1815), 46-58.

MR, lxxix (1816), 41-48.



———, Prometheus, edited by C. J. Blomfield (Cambridge, 1810).

Reviews: BC, xxxviii (1811), 162-69, 227-34.

ER, xvii (1810-11), 211-42.

GM, lxxxix<sup>1</sup> (1811), 545-48.

MR, lxxix (1816), 41-48.

QR, v (1811), 203-29.

———, ———, edited by G. Burges (London, 1831).

Review: Ath, iv (1831), 104.

———, ———, text of Dindorf, edited by J. Griffiths (Oxford, 1834).

Review: Ath, vii (1834), 256.

———, Septem, edited by C.J. Blomfield (Cambridge, 1812).

Reviews: BC, xli (1813), 618-36.

MR, lxxix (1816), 41-48.

———, ———, text of Dindorf, edited by J. Griffiths (Oxford, 1835).

Review: Ath, viii (1835), 337.

#### B. Euripides

Euripides, Works, edited by A. and J.M. Duncan, assisted by R.H. Evans, P. Elmsley, E. Maltby and C.J. Blomfield, 9 vols. (Glasgow, 1821).

Review: EcR, n.s., xv (1821), 342-44.

———, Supplices, Iphigeneia in Aulide et in Tauris, edited by T. Gaisford, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1811).

Review: QR, vii (1812), 441-64.

———, Hecuba, Orestes, Phoenissae, Medea, text of Porson, edited by J. Scholefield (Cambridge, 1826).

Review: BC, 4th s., ii (1827), 58-77.

———, Heraclidae et Medea, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1828).

No reviews.

———, Alcestis, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1806). No reviews.

———, ———, edited by J.H. Monk (Cambridge, 1816).

Reviews: BC, vi (1816), 426-32.

QR, xv (1816), 112-25.

———, ———, edited by J.R. Major (London, 1837).

Review: MR, 1837, vol. iii, 416-21.

- , Andromache, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1807). No reviews.
- , Bacchae, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1821). No reviews.
- , Electra, edited by H. Robinson (Cambridge, 1822). No reviews.
- , Hecuba, edited by R. Porson (London, 1808).  
Review: ER, xix (1811-12), 64-95.
- , ———, text of Porson, edited by J.R. Major (London, 1826).  
Review: EcR, n.s., xxix (1828), 248-50.
- , Heraclidae, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1813).  
Review: QR, ix (1813), 343-66.
- , Hippolytus, edited by J.H. Monk (Cambridge, 1811).  
Reviews: BC, xxxix (1812), 559-70.  
GM, lxxxiii<sup>1</sup> (1813), 451-53.  
QR, viii (1812), 215-18.
- , Iphigeneia in Aulide, edited by J.H. Monk (Cambridge, 1840). No reviews.
- , Medea, edited by R. Porson (Cambridge, 1801). No reviews.
- , ———, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1818). No reviews.
- , ———, text of Porson, edited by J.R. Major (London, 1829). No reviews.
- , Orestes, edited by R. Porson (London, 1798, 1811).  
Reviews: MR, xxxi (1800), 176-83.  
ER, xix (1811-12), 64-95.
- , ———, text of Porson, edited by J.R. Major (London, 1830).  
Reviews: Ath, iv (1831), 9.  
MR, 1831, vol. ii, 147-48.
- , Phoenissae, edited by G. Burges (London, 1809).  
Reviews: MR, lxviii (1812), 243-53.  
QR, iii (1810), 167-85.
- , ———, edited by R. Porson (London, 1799).  
Review: MR, xxxiii (1800), 375-79.
- , ———, text of Porson, edited by J.R. Major (London, 1830). No reviews.

————, Troades, edited by G. Burges (Cambridge, 1807).

Reviews: MR, lxviii (1812), 243-53.

QR, iii (1810), 167-85.

### C. Sophocles

Sophocles, Tragedies, edited by P. Gaisford, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1826).

Review: BC, 4th s., i (1827), 281-320.

————, Ajax, edited by J.R. Pitman (London, 1830). No reviews.

————, Antigone, edited by J. Brasse (London, 1830). No reviews.

————, Electra, text of Hermann, edited by F.E.J. Valpy (London, 1838). No reviews.

————, Oedipus Coloneus, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1823). No reviews.

————, —————, text of Brunck, edited by J. Brasse (London, 1829).

Reviews: Ath, ii (1829), 596.

WR, xiii (1830), 480-94.

————, Oedipus Tyrannus, edited by P. Elmsley (Oxford, 1811). No reviews.

————, —————, text of Brunck, edited by J. Brasse (London, 1829).

Review: MR, n.s., xi (1829), 153.

————, Philoctetes, edited by G. Burges (London, 1833).

Reviews: Ath, vi (1833), 635.

GM, ciii<sup>2</sup> (1833), 327-28.

LG, xvii (1833), 630.

————, Trachiniae, text of Brunck, edited by J. Brasse (London, 1830). No reviews.

## APPENDIX 4

## REVIEWS OF GREEK AND LATIN POETRY IN TRANSLATION

Section A contains all reviews of Greek tragedy in translation, however brief. In Section B, I have listed only those other reviews of Greek and Latin poetry in translation which contain material of particular value in determining early nineteenth-century attitudes to the theory and practice of translation from classical poetry.

A. Reviews of Greek Tragedy in Translation

Aeschylus, Popular Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets: Vol. 1, Aeschylus (London, 1831). Potter's translation.

Reviews: Ath, iv (1831), 327-28.

Bl, xxx (1831), 350-90.

NMM, xxxiii (1831), 156.

———, Valpy's Family Classical Library: Vol. XLV, Aeschylus (London, 1833). Potter's translation.

Reviews: Met, viii (1833), 47.

MM, n.s., xvi (1833), 468-69.

———, Agamemnon, translated by H.S. Boyd (London, 1823).

Reviews: EcR, n.s., xxiii (1825), 31-54.

GM, xciv<sup>2</sup> (1824), 49-51.

MR, cvi (1825), 113-32.

———, ———, translated by J. Symmons (London, 1824).

Reviews: Bl, xxx (1831), 350-90.

CJ, xxxi (1825), 101-12.

EcR, n.s., xxiii (1825), 31-54.

MR, cvi (1825), 113-32.

———, ———, translated by J.S. Harford (London, 1831).

Reviews: Ath, v (1832), 334-35.

BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 378.

GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 31-32.

LG, xvi (1832), 322-24.

NMM, xxxvi (1832), 298-99.

———, ———, translated by T. Medwin (London, 1832).

Reviews: Ath, v (1832), 363.

BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 379-80.

GM, cii<sup>2</sup> (1832), 142-44.

LG, xvi (1832), 322-24.

Met, v (1832), 55-56.

NMM, xxxvi (1832), 479-80.

———, ———, translated by G.C. Fox (in The Death of Demosthenes, and Other Poems, London, 1839).

Reviews: Ath, xii (1839), 985.

GM, n.s., xiv (1840), 276.

———, Persae, translated by W. Palin (London, 1829).

Reviews: Ath, ii (1829), 467-69.

EcR, 3rd s., iii (1830), 376-79.

NMM, xxvii (1829), 510-11.

———, Prometheus, translated by T. Medwin (London, 1832).

Reviews: Ath, v (1832), 301-02.

BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 379-80.

GM, cii<sup>1</sup> (1832), 532-34.

LG, xvi (1832), 261-62.

Met, v (1832), 55-56.

NMM, xxxvi (1832), 479-80.

———, ———, translated by E. Barrett (London, 1833).

Reviews: Ath, vi (1833), 362.

GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 610-11.

QR, lxvi (1840), 382-89.

———, ———, translated by G.C. Fox (London, 1835).

Review: GM, n.s., v (1836), 168-69.

Euripides, Valpy's Family Classical Library: Vols. XXXIV-XXXVI, Euripides (London, 1832). Potter's translation.

Reviews: Met, vi (1833), 118-19.

NMM, xxxvii (1833), 103.

———, Cyclops, translated by P.B. Shelley (in Posthumous Poems, London, 1824).

Review: CJ, xxxi (1825), 159-65.

———, Hecuba, translated by T.W.C. Edwards (London, 1824).

Review: BC, n.s., xxi (1824), 414-20.

Sophocles, Tragedies, translated by T. Dale, 2 vols. (London, 1824).

Reviews: BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 385.



EcR, n.s., xxi (1824), 289-312.

MR, cvi (1825), 225-38.

QR, xxxi (1824-25), 198-210.

———, Valpy's Family Classical Library: Vol. XXXIII, Sophocles (London, 1832). Francklin's translation.

Reviews: Ath, v (1832), 616-17.

Met, vi (1832), 84.

———, Electra, translated by W. Drennan (Belfast, 1817).

Review: MR, lxxxix (1819), 26-30.

———, ———, translated by G.C. Fox (London, 1835).

Review: GM, n.s., v (1836), 168-69.

———, Oedipus Tyrannus, translated by T. Maurice (in .  
Westminster Abbey; with Other Occasional Poems, London, 1813).

Review: BC, xlii (1813), 547-51.

———, ———, translated by T.W.C. Edwards (London, 1828).

Review: ER, xlvii (1828), 419-41.

———, Specimens, translated by T. Dale (in The Outlaw of Taurus, a Poem; to which are added, Scenes from Sophocles, London, 1820).

Review: MR, xcv (1821), 99-101.

———, Specimens of Tragic Chorusses from Sophocles (London, 1832).

Reviews: Ath, v (1832), 302.

BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 371.

GM, cii<sup>1</sup> (1832), 335.

Met, iv (1832), 92.

MR, 1832, vol. ii, 472.

J. Anstice, Selections from the Choric Poetry of the Greek Dramatic Writers (London, 1832).

Reviews: Ath, v (1832), 789.

BC, 4th s., xiii (1833), 399-405.

GM, ciii<sup>1</sup> (1833), 135-36.

LG, xvii (1833), 49-50.

Met, vi (1833), 84.

NMM, xxxvii (1833), 243.

R. Bland and others, Collections from the Greek Anthology, and from the Pastoral, Elegiac, and Dramatic Poets of Greece (London,

1813).

Reviews: BC, xlii (1813), 159-70.

EcR, ix<sup>2</sup> (1813), 144-52.

MR, lxxviii (1815), 285-99, 356-65.

QR, x (1813-14), 139-57.

R. Morehead, Poetical Epistles and Specimens of Translation (Edinburgh, 1813).

Reviews: Bl, i (1817), 626-30.

MR, lxxix (1816), 797-99.

J. Smith, The House of Atreus and the House of Laius (London, 1819).

Reviews: BC, n.s., xi (1819), 656-64.

MR, xcii (1820), 87-95.

## B. Other Principal Reviews

### (i) Greek Poetry

Anacreon, Odes, translated by T. Moore (London, 1800).

Reviews: BC, xx (1802), 27-32.

ER, ii (1803), 462-76.

———, Odes, translated by T. Girdlestone (London, 1803).

Reviews: EM, xlvi (1804), 259-65.

MR, li (1806), 437-39.

Aristophanes, Acharnians and Knights, translated by T. Mitchell (London, 1820).

Reviews: ER, xxxiv (1820), 271-319.

QR, xxiii (1820), 474-510.

———, Birds, translated by H.F. Cary (London, 1824).

Reviews: EcR, n.s., xxii (1824), 217-38.

MR, civ (1824), 351-67.

Hesiod, The Remains of Hesiod the Ascraean, translated by C.A. Elton (London, 1809).

Review: MR, lix (1809), 19-29.

——— (in English Translations in Poetry and Prose, from the Greek Poets and Prose Authors, Vol. I, Part 1, London, 1808), Cooke's translation adapted by F. Lee.

Reviews: EcR, v<sup>1</sup> (1809), 318-24.

MR, lviii (1809), 315-18.

Homer, Iliad, translated by J. Morrice, 2 vols. (London, 1809).

Review: MR, lxi (1810), 337-51.

———, ———, translated by W. Sotheby, 2 vols. (London, 1831).

Reviews: Ath, iv (1831), 210-11.

Bl, xxix (1831), 668-87.

MR, 1831, vol. ii, 96-116.

NMM, xxxiii (1831), 204-05.

———, Iliad I, translated by P. Williams (London, 1806).

Review: MR, lii (1807), 441-42.

———, Specimens of a New Version of Homer, translated by W. Sotheby (London, 1830).

Reviews: ER, li (1830), 463-77.

MR, n.s., xiv (1830), 222-32.

Pindar, Odes, translated by A. Moore (Part 1, London, 1822; Part 2, London, 1834).

Reviews: QR, xxviii (1822), 410-30.

QR, li (1834), 18-54.

———, ———, translated by H.F. Cary (London, 1833).

Reviews: ER, lix (1834), 124-42.

QR, li (1834), 18-54.

Theocritus, Bion and Moschus, translated by M.J. Chapman (London, 1836).

Reviews: FM, xiii (1836), 600-07.

NMM, xlvii (1836), 241-42.

R. Bland, Translations, Chiefly from the Greek Anthology (London, 1806).

Review: ER, ix (1806-07), 319-31.

C.A. Elton, Specimens of the Classic Poets, 3 vols. (London, 1814).

Reviews: BC, n.s., ii (1814), 490-508.

EM, lxvii (1815), 335-37.

MR, lxxviii (1815), 76-86.

QR, xiii (1815), 151-55.

J.H. Merivale, Collections from the Greek Anthology. A New Edition (London, 1833).

Reviews: BC, 4th s., xiv (1833), 426-28.

QR, xlix (1833), 349-81.

Miss A.J. Vardil, Poems and Translations from the Minor Greek Poets and Others (London, 1809).

Review: MR, lxii (1810), 284-87.

Mrs M. Ware, Poems, Consisting of Translations from the Greek,

Latin and Italian, with Some Originals (London, 1809).

Review: BC, xxxiv (1809), 296-98.

(ii) Latin Poetry

Catullus, Poems, translated by G. Lamb, 2 vols. (London, 1821).

Reviews: LM, iv (1821), 86-90.

MR, xcvi (1822), 1-13.

Juvenal, Satires, translated by W. Gifford (London, 1802).

Review: MR, xl (1803), 1-21.

———, ———, translated by F. Hodgson (London, 1807).

Review: MR, lv (1808), 246-62.

Lucretius, The Nature of Things, translated by J.M. Good, 2 vols. (London, 1805).

Reviews: EcR, ii<sup>2</sup> (1806), 603-10, 686-97.

MR, liv (1807), 387-404.

Persius, Satires, anonymous translation (London, 1806).

Review: QR, i (1809), 355-61.

———, ———, translated by F. Howes (London, 1809).

Reviews: EcR, v<sup>2</sup> (1809), 794-800.

MR, lxi (1810), 1-23.

Seneca, Medea and Octavia, translated by C.A. Wheelwright (in Poems, Original and Translated, Including Versions of the Medea and Octavia of Seneca, 2 vols., London, 1811).

Review: EcR, vii<sup>2</sup> (1811), 715-20.

Virgil, Georgics, translated by W. Sotheby (London, 1800).

Reviews: BC, xvi (1800), 655-61.

BC, xvii (1801), 164-74.

———, ———, translated by J.R. Deare (London, 1808).

Reviews: MR, lxi (1810), 126-32.

QR, i (1809), 69-77.

———, ———, translated by W. Stawell (London, 1808).

Review: QR, i (1809), 69-77.

J. Dunlop, Selections from the Latin Anthology (Edinburgh, 1838).

Review: MR, 1838, vol. i, 560-69.

APPENDIX 5  
ARTICLES ON GREEK TRAGEDY

This list is based on, but not limited to, the twenty periodicals surveyed in Chapter 5. It includes the eight articles on Greek tragedy listed by William S. Ward in Literary Reviews in British Periodicals, 1798-1820, II.619-27, not all of which I have seen. Review articles and articles in the specialist classical magazines have been included only if they are substantially discussions of the literary qualities of Greek tragedy.

Athenaeum

'On the Agamemnon of Aeschylus', [?by T. Medwin], Ath, v (1832), 320-21.

Le Beau Monde

'On Tragedy among the Ancients', Le Beau Monde, iv (1808), 110-13.  
Not seen.

Blackwood's Magazine

'Remarks on Greek Tragedy. No I. (Aeschyli Prometheus)', by Z. [J.G. Lockhart], Bl, i (1817), 39-42.

'Remarks on Greek Tragedy. No II (Aeschyli Choephoroi — Sophoclis Electra)', [by J.G. Lockhart], Bl, i (1817), 147-52.

'Remarks on Greek Tragedy. No III (Septem adversus Thebas Aeschyli, Euripidis Phoenissae)', [by J.G. Lockhart], Bl, i (1817), 352-57.

'Remarks on Greek Tragedy. No IV (Philoctetes Sophoclis)', by Z. [J.G. Lockhart], Bl, i (1817), 593-96.

'The Greek Drama. No I. The Agamemnon of Aeschylus', [by J. Wilson], Bl, xxx (1831), 350-90.

'Theory of Greek Tragedy', [by T. De Quincey], Bl, xlvii (1840), 145-53.

British Critic

'The Characters of the Greek Dramatic Poets', [?by R.A. Willmott], BC, 4th s., xii (1832), 371-97.



Edinburgh Magazine

'Remarks on Greek Tragedy (Iphigenia in Aulide Euripidis)', [by J.G. Lockhart], EdM, i (1817), 240-43.

'Remarks on Greek and French Tragedy. — Comparison of the Hippolytus of Euripides with the Phedre of Racine', [by J.G. Lockhart], EdM, i (1817), 428-37.

'Observations on the Agamemnon of Eschylus, Illustrated with Translations', [by R. Morehead], EdM, i (1817), 299-306, 442-44; ii (1818), 27-31, 112-16.

'Letters on Dramatic Poetry, and More Particularly on the Comparison of the Ancient and Modern Drama. Letter I', by 'Thespis' [R. Morehead], EdM, vii (1820), 516-21.

'The Greek Drama. The Furies, by Aeschylus', by 'Philotheus' [R. Morehead], EdM, viii (1821), 519-22.

Edinburgh Review

'Greek Tragedy', [by J. Williams], ER, xlvii (1828), 418-41.

European Magazine

'The Tragic Drama', EM, lxxx (1821), 401-11, 497-513.

Flowers of Literature

'Ancient and Modern Drama Contrasted', Flowers of Literature, vii (1808-09), 146-48.

Foreign Quarterly Review

'Volpicella on the Greek Tragedies', FQR, xix (1837), 446-52.

'Euripides and the Greek Drama: its Musical and Religious Importance', [by J.S. Blackie], FQR, xxiv (1840), 229-67.

Gentleman's Magazine

'On the Ancient Tragedy and Comedy', by L.R.F., GM, xcvi<sup>1</sup> (1828), 318-20, 410-11; xcvi<sup>2</sup> (1828), 127.

Gold's London Magazine

'Comparison between Ancient and Modern Dramatists', Gold's London Magazine, i (1820), 86-89.

'Critical Essays. No III. On the Origin of the Greek Tragedy; with Observations on the Genius and Character of Aeschylus', by W.F.D., Gold's London Magazine, i (1820), 379-81.

'Critical Essays. No IV. On the Life and Genius of Aeschylus', by W.F.D., Gold's London Magazine, i (1820), 483-87.

The Inspector, a Weekly Dramatic Paper

'On the Ancient Drama', Inspector, 9 January 1819, p. 1. Not seen.

Leeds Literary Observer

'The Virtuous Tendency of Ancient Tragedy', Leeds Literary Observer, i (July, 1819), 241-43.

London Magazine

'On the Tragic Drama of Greece. Introductory to a Series of Scenes from the Greek Tragic Poets', by 'Vida' [C.A. Elton], LM, vii (1823), 625-33.

'Greek Tragic Scenes. Aeschylus. From the Agamemnon', by 'Vida' [C.A. Elton], LM, viii (1823), 262-72.

'Greek Tragic Scenes. No II. Sophocles. From the Electra', by 'Vida' [C.A. Elton], LM, viii (1823), 373-80.

'Greek Tragic Scenes. No III. Euripides. From the Orestes', by 'Vida' [C.A. Elton], LM, viii (1823), 503-08.

'Richard the Third, after the Manner of the Ancients', [by ?C.A. Elton], LM, ix (1824), 603-12.

'The Dramas of Euripides: the Hecuba', by 'The Harrovian' [R.A. Willmott], LM, 3rd s., iii (1829), 469-75.

Metropolitan Magazine

'Beauties of the Grecian Drama', Met, xv (1836), 195-99.

Monthly Magazine

'Observations on the Grecian Tragedy', MM, xxxviii (1814), 410-12; xxxix (1815), 25-28, 102-04, 206-08, 317-19, 515-17; xl (1815), 15-17, 108-09, 211-14, 399-402.

New Monthly Magazine

'Lectures on Poetry, by T. Campbell. Lecture X. General Observations on the Greek Drama', NMM, xvi (1826), 1-10.

'Lectures on Poetry by T. Campbell. Lecture X. Conclusion of Lecture. — The Greek Drama — Aeschylus', NMM, xvi (1826), 233-42.

'Lectures on Poetry, by T. Campbell. Lecture XI [Sophocles]', NMM, xvi (1826), 520-32; xvii (1826), 97-108.

'Lectures on Poetry, by T. Campbell. Lecture XII. Euripides', NMM, xvii (1826), 393-403.

'The Spirit of the Greek Dramatic Poets. The Agamemnon of Aeschylus', by 'W. Trinity College, Cambridge' [R.A. Willmott], NMM, xxxv (1832), 211-27.

Penny Magazine

'Aeschylus', PM, ii (1833), 2-3, 18-19.

'Ruins of a Greek Theatre at Syracuse, with an Account of the Ancient Greek Drama', PM, v (1836), 281-83.

'Greek Drama', PM, viii (1839), 188-91.

'Greek Drama. — No II. Aeschylus', PM, viii (1839), 194-96.

'Greek Drama'. — No III. Sophocles', PM, viii (1839), 212-15.

'Greek Drama'. — No IV. Euripides', PM, viii (1839), 223-24.

Philological Museum

'On the Irony of Sophocles', by C.T. [Connop Thirlwall], PhM, ii (1833), 483-537.

Quarterly Review

'Modern Criticism on Aeschylus — Life and Character of Aeschylus', [by R. Scott], QR, lxiv (1839), 370-95.

The Reflector

'Greek and English Tragedy', The Reflector, i (1810), 62-72.

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A. Manuscripts

- BL Egerton MS 2800, ff.54-57 (Coleridge's notes on rhythm and metre)
- Mitchell Library, Glasgow MS 75/33 (Thomas Campbell's draft lecture on Greek drama)
- NLS MS 672, f. 73; MS 673, ff.75-137 (letters from Robert Morehead to Archibald Constable between 1814 and 1826)
- NLS MS 789, pp.648, 806; MS 790, pp.82-83, 287, 298-99, 320, 323, 358-60, 362-64, 388, 393, 451; MS 791, p.220 (letters from Archibald Constable to Thomas Pringle and James Cleghorn between 1816 and 1821)
- NLS MS 790, pp.541-42; MS 791, p.209 (letters from Archibald Constable to Robert Morehead between 1817 and 1822)
- NLS MS 4021, ff.90-92 (letters from James Christie to William Blackwood in 1828)
- NLS MS 4040, ff.154-57; MS 4044, ff.131-39; MS 4046, ff.96-97; MS 4048, ff.143-48; MS 4168, f.163; MS 4197, f.30 (letters from Matthew James Chapman to John Wilson and Robert Blackwood between 1835 and 1865)

B. Nineteenth-Century Newspapers and PeriodicalsThe Annual ReviewThe AthenaeumBlackwood's MagazineThe British CriticThe Classical JournalThe Critical ReviewThe Eclectic ReviewThe Edinburgh MagazineThe Edinburgh ReviewThe European MagazineFlowers of LiteratureThe Foreign Quarterly ReviewFraser's MagazineThe Gentleman's MagazineGold's London MagazineKnight's Quarterly MagazineThe Leeds Literary ObserverThe Literary GazetteThe London Magazine

The London Review

The Metropolitan

The Monthly Magazine

The Monthly Review

The New Monthly Magazine

The Philological Museum

The Penny Magazine

The Quarterly Review

The Reading Mercury

The Reflector

The Star

The Westminster Review

### C. Texts and Translations of Greek Tragedy

Aeschylus, [Tragedies], with an English translation by Herbert Weir Smyth (Loeb Classical Library), 2 vols. (London, 1922)

———, The Tragedies of Aeschylus, translated by Robert Potter, new edition (Oxford, 1808)

———, Popular English Specimens of the Greek Dramatic Poets; with Introductory Essays, and Explanatory Notes. Vol I, Aeschylus [translated by Robert Potter] (London, 1831)

———, Agamemnon, edited by John Dewar Denniston and Denys Page (Oxford, 1957)

———, The Agamemnon of Aeschylus. A Tragedy, Translated from the Greek, By Hugh Stuart Boyd (London, 1823)

———, The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, translated by John Symmons (London, 1824)

———, Αἰσχύλου Ἀγαμέμνων Τριγλωττος, textum ad fidem editionum, praesertim Blomfeldianae, recognovit, notasque Anglice conscriptas et indices adjecit, J. Kennedy. . . Deutsch übersetzt von Heinrich Voss; English, translated by James Kennedy (London and Dublin, 1829)

———, The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, Illustrated by a Dissertation on Grecian Tragedy, etc., by John S. Harford (London, 1831)

———, The Agamemnon of Aeschylus, Translated into English Verse, by Thomas Medwin (London, 1832)

———, Choephoroi, with Introduction and Notes by A. Sidgwick (Oxford, 1884)

———, Eumenides, with Introduction and Notes by A. Sidgwick (Oxford, 1895)

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